THE PHILOSOPHY OF VISISHTADVAITA

BY

P. N. SRINIVASACHARI

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DEDICATED TO

SREE MAHARAJAH RAO VENKATA KUMARA MAHIPATHI SURYA RAU BAHADUR, D.LITT.,

Maharajah of Pithapuram

AS A TOKEN OF THE AUTHOR'S GRATITUDE FOR HIS PATRONAGE AND DEEP INTEREST IN VIS'IṢṬĀDVAITA

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE main purpose of this work is to give a critical and comprehensive exposition of the central features of the philosophy of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and its relation to other schools of *Vēdānta*. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is not as widely known as *Advaita* among students of Philosophy. It has also suffered at the hands of its few expositors who use the misleading term 'qualified monism' as its English equivalent and who in their interpretations identify it with the *Bhēdābhēda* system of *Vēdānta* and Hegelian thought. With a view to do justice to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and set the balance right so far as influence on modern thought is concerned, I published in 1928 *Rāmānuja's Idea of the Finite Self* in a very concise form. My later work, *The Philosophy of Bhēdābhēda*, published in 1934, was designed to serve as an exhaustive introduction to the study of Rāmānuja and the development of his system in the history of Indian Philosophy. The present work is a comprehensive but modest survey of the system of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as outlined in a series of eight lectures delivered by me under the auspices of the University of Madras. The delay in its publication was largely due to the preoccupations of administrative work.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita maintains its position in the history of Indian thought by establishing its own *siddhānta* by a criticism of rival systems. It has, at the same time, a synthetic insight into the essentials of other *dars'anas* and accepts whatever in them is consistent with its own basic principles. It is a true philosophy of religion which reconciles the opposition between philosophy and religion and the conflict between monism and pluralism. If it is liberally interpreted in terms of contemporary philosophy and comparative religion without in any way sacrificing its foundational principles, it is capable of satisfying the demands of science and philosophy on the one hand, and of ethics and religion on the other; and an attempt is made in the following pages to give such an interpretation.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to all those who have helped me in the preparation of this book. I had the rare privilege of sitting at the feet of the late Mahāmahōpādhyāya Kapistalam Des'ikācāriar Svāmi, and being instructed by him in the essentials of the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita Dars'ana*. My thanks are due to my teacher, Sri S. Vasudevachariar, who warmly encouraged me in this venture by reading the type-script and offering valuable suggestions; to my esteemed friend, Professor M. Hiriyanna for the great care with which he went through the MS. and for important and friendly counsel; to Dewan Bahadur V. K. Ramanujachariar, who, in spite of the infirmities of old age, read portions of the type-script and commended this 'labour of love' and to Rao Bahadur K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar who

also read portions of the work and helped to secure its early publication. I record my gratitude to my friends, Rao Saheb M. R. Rajagopala Aiyangar, Sri G. K. Rangaswami Aiyangar and Sri K. R. Sarma for their continued and enthusiastic assistance in reading through the proofs and in the citation of authorities; I am also beholden to Dr. R. Nagaraja Sarma who willingly read portions and offered valuable criticism and to Sri D. Ramaswami Aiyangar for similar help on some of the concluding chapters. My thanks are due to Sri P. Sankaranarayanan and to Dr. T. R. Chintamani for kindly preparing the Index and the Errata respectively. I take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligations to the Madras University for the kind permission to utilize my lectures on Rāmānuja in the preparation of this work. Dr. G. Srinivasa Murti, the Honorary Director of the Adyar Library, has placed me under heavy obligation by publishing the work in the Adyar Library Series; I thank Dr. C. Kunhan Raja for his kind support; I also thank Sri A. N. Krishna Aiyangar for his hearty co-operation and supplying all the necessary aids in the successful completion of the work. The elegant and expeditious printing of the Vasanta Press in these difficult times is mainly due to its enthusiastic Superintendent, Sri C. Subbarayudu. Sri P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar and Sri R. C. Srinivasa Raghavan prepared the typed press copy and went through the proofs.

Sri Krishna Library,
Mylapore, 30th April, 1943

P. N SRINIVASACHARI

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE first edition of the *Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita* was released from the press on 8th May, 1943. That a second edition has become necessary within three years is an indication of the warm reception which the book has been accorded. I am grateful to the several scholars in the country for the interest that they took in it and for the appreciative opinions. The war was not favourable to such publications being sent to countries outside India. I hope that the end of the war and the lifting of the controls on the book trade will enable the book to be widely circulated in foreign countries as well.

The second edition is virtually a reprint of the first except for a few verbal changes made in the text. I thank Dr. Srinivasa Murti, the Director of the Adyar Library for this opportunity to publish the work once again. In passing the proofs I have been ably assisted by Mr. A. N. Krishna Aiyangar, M.A., L.T., of the Adyar Library. I wish to record my gratitude to the Superintendent of the Vasanta Press, Mr. C. Subbarayudu for the very handsome printing and get up of the book.

Sri Krishna Library,
Mylapore, 30th April, 1946

P. N. SRINIVASACHARI

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INTRODUCTION

THE Philosophy of *Vēdānta* is enshrined in the *Upaniṣads*, the *Gītā* and the *Brahma Sūtras*, which together constitute its foundation and supreme authority. Its truths are true for ever and impersonal, and do not depend on the personality of a historic founder. The impersonal is embodied in the experience of seers, prophets and philosophers, who only discover the truth and do not create it *de novo*. The *Upaniṣads* contain the wisdom of *Vēdānta*; the *Gītā* gives its cream; and the *Sūtras* expound its philosophic value. The fundamental problem of *Vēdānta* is: "What is that by knowing which everything else is known?" and its solution is that by realizing Brahman everything is realized. The solution is not merely metaphysically satisfactory, but also spiritually satisfying. When finite consciousness is purified and exalted, it can break through the confines of finiteness, intuit the Infinite or Brahman, and thus realize the supreme goal of experience. By an immanent criticism of the categories of experience and by spiritual induction, it is possible for the metaphysician as a *mumukṣu* to renounce the ephemeral values of worldliness and reach his eternal home in the absolute. He then becomes a wise man or *vidvān*, and, with his philosophic illumination and moral exaltation, he becomes a pattern of perfection, and works for world welfare. *Vēdānta* is thus the highest exposition of Indian philosophy in its

theoretical and practical aspects, and there is nothing good and true in the world more elevating and beneficial than *Vēdāntic* thought and life. It is therefore essential for a seeker after truth and eternal happiness to know and appreciate the meaning and value of *Vēdānta*, the most precious gift of India to mankind.

The *Vēdānta Sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa, identified with Vyāsa, are, by common consent, regarded as the most authoritative and systematic exposition of the *Upaniṣads* and recognized as the best manual of *Vēdānta*. On a superficial view, the *Upaniṣads* appear to be conflicting and self-contradictory without any trace of logical consistency. But the *Sūtrakāra*, with his genius for synoptic knowledge, affirms the continuity and unity of all the texts[1], and the *Sūtras* string together the teachings of the *Upanisds* and present them as a systematic whole. The *Sūtra* is cryptic or laconic, and is defined as a clear, concise and comprehensive aphorism that should be faultless and free from repetition. The method of employing connected catchwords to arrive at systematic unity is planned and perfected in the *Brahma Sūtras*. It is unrivalled for its metaphysical profundity and spiritual power. From the first *Sūtra* to the last, the arguments develop rhythmically step by step until the whole scheme is completed. The parts are so organically related with one another and with the whole, that, if a part is destroyed, the symmetry of the whole will also be destroyed. The central idea that pervades the constituent elements is the truth that Brahman is absolutely real and spiritually realizable. The aphorist is also a supreme artist and by the method of *samanvaya*, he reconciles the apparently conflicting *Upaniṣads*, and harmonizes them into a coherent

[1] *Brahma Sūtras*, III. iii. 1.

whole. The dominant motive of the *Sūtrakāra* is to combine philosophic speculation with spirituality and communicate the wisdom so gained to aspiring humanity. The *Sūtras* in their exposition start with the aspiration of the philosopher or *mumukṣu* for *Brahmajñāna* and end with the attainment by the *mukta* of *Brahmānubhava*.

The *Vēdānta Sūtras* consist of four chapters divided into sixteen sections or *pādas*, each of which is sub-divided into *adhikaraṇas* or topics of *Vēdāntic* interest. While, according to S'aṅkara, there are 555 aphorisms, and according to Pūrṇaprajña, 564, Rāmānuja counts only 545. The first chapter expounds the nature of Brahman as the ultimate ground of the universe of *acit*, and *cit*, in the light of the *kāraṇa-vākyas* of the *Upaniṣads* dealing with the cause or ground of the universe. The second chapter called the *Avirōdhādhyāya* establishes the same truth negatively by refuting and rejecting non-*Vēdāntic* theories. The third chapter deals exhaustively with the *sādhanas* or means of attaining Brahman in accordance with the *Vēdāntic* truth that the metaphysical ground of all beings is the goal of religious meditation.[1] The last chapter known as the *Phalādhyāya* brings to light the nature of *mukti* as the fruition of the whole philosophical enquiry. The end and aim of the whole system is summed up in the first four *Sūtras* called the *Catussūtrī*. They assert that Brahman is the subject of enquiry in its philosophical and spiritual aspect and the supreme end of experience. The first *Sūtra* states that the ultimate question of philosophy which is also the quest of religion is the knowledge of Brahman, and thus identifies the metaphysician with the *mumukṣu*. The second *Sūtra* solves the supreme problem of ontology by declaring that the supreme

[1] kāraṇantu dhyēyaḥ.

Reality of the universe is Brahman and that it is the One without a second. The third insists on the *s'āstra* as the supreme source of this knowledge on the ground that spiritual wisdom is the criterion and crown of all experience, and that it can only be spiritually discerned. Dialectics leads to endless disputations and ultimate doubts and cannot solve the quest of the *mumukṣu* which is supra-sensuous and supra-rational. The fourth *Sūtra*, *tat tu samanvayāt*, establishes the comprehensive truth of *Vēdānta* that the philosophic knowledge of Brahman also satisfies the spiritual quest and imparts the eternal bliss of *Brahmānanda* to the *mukta*. The true philosopher is thus a synoptic thinker and spiritual seer, who, by knowing Brahman, realizes everything else, and communicates his wisdom to others.

The *Upaniṣads*, the *Gītā* and the *Sūtras* teach the same *Vēdāntic* truth in its mystical, moral and metaphysical aspects respectively, in spite of their apparent self-contradictions and diversities of interpretation. The reference in the *Sūtras* to different ancient *ācāryas* like Ās'marathya, Auḍulōmi Kās'akṛtsna, Bādari and Jaimini is sufficient internal evidence to prove the prevalence, from very ancient times, of a variety of *Vēdāntic* schools, each claiming to be the true representative of the teaching of the *Upaniṣads*. All the *Vēdāntic* teachers expound the *Sūtras* in a coherent way, though they represent different types of philosophy. They claim the authority of immemorial tradition for their *siddhānta* and satisfy the triple tests of *s'āstraic* support, philosophical stability and intuitive certainty (or *s'ruti*, *yukti* and *anubhava*). All the *Vēdāntic* schools generally agree in the refutation of non-*Vēdāntic* schools and the establishment of the truth that the supreme endeavour and end of man is *Brahmajñāna* or the

realization of Brahman. But they differ in the exact determination of the nature of Brahman and the means and value of attaining Him. Among the chief exponents of the *Sūtras* are the well-known *ācāryas*, S'aṅkara, Bhāskara, Yādava, Nimbārka, Rāmānuja, S'rikaṇṭha, Madhva, Vallabha and Baladēva. S'aṅkara's *Advaita*, claiming to follow the teaching of Bādari, is the oldest of the extant expositions of the *Sūtras*. The *Bhēdābhēda* schools of Bhāskara and Yādava are midway, logically and chronologically, between S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja, and may be said to follow the tradition of Auḍulōmi and Ās'marathya. The *bhāṣya* of Yādava is not now available, though there are references to it in the works of Rāmānuja and Vēdānta Dēs'ika. The Nimbārka school of *Dvaitādvaita* marks the logical transition from the *Bhēdābhēda* of Yādava to the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* of Rāmānuja. The system of Vijñāna Bhikṣu also rejects *Māyāvāda* and the theory of *aikya*. The exposition of S'rīkaṇṭha, in its purely metaphysical aspect, is not very different from the system of Rāmānuja, though the *siddhāntas* and *sampradāyas* are different. The *Dvaitadars'ana* of Madhvācārya brings out the philosophic theism of *Vēdānta* in its *Vaiṣṇava* aspect and the *Acintya Bhēdābhēda* of Caitanya and the *S'uddhādvaita* of Vallabha stress the mystic side of *Vaiṣṇavite* experience.

The systems of *Advaita*, *Dvaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* are the most popular forms of *Vēdānta* at present, and the other systems are either forgotten chapters in the history of Indian philosophy like the schools of *Bhēdābhēda* or different versions or variations of the three fundamental types, like those of Nimbārka or S'rīkara. Each school has a sanctified tradition or *sampradāya* and an ever-growing critical and constructive philosophy; the best exponents of each school have always

been the patterns of their essential teachings. The position of each system is further strengthened by the opposition of rival schools in an atmosphere of disinterested criticism and becomes for that reason enriched by *vākyas*, *vṛttis* and commentaries revealing rare dialectic and constructive skill. In the comparative study of *Vēdānta* in the world of contemporary philosophy, eastern and western, the systems of *Dvaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* are not so well-known and appreciated as *Advaita;* and this is as much due to the default of the followers of the two systems, as to the defects in the provision of facilities for their study in the seats of learning. The study of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is of absorbing interest to all thinkers not only on account of its intrinsic value but also on account of its synthetic insight as a philosophy of religion. It mediates between philosophic monism on the one hand and the theism of *Dvaita* on the other. It has a universal appeal to humanity because it recognizes the immanence of God in all beings and the innate spirituality and salvability of all *jīvas*, thus shedding the twin evils of exclusiveness and hatred. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* gives an extended meaning to the *pramāṇas*, liberalizes the theory of the *sādhanas* and exalts the value and destiny of the individual. In the highest sense of *Vēdānta*, spiritual truth is true for ever and the worth of a true philosopher or *Vēdāntin* does not depend on his birth, the status he may acquire or the language in which he may communicate his spirituality, though these conditions may have some determining influence on his character and scope for service. He has a soul sight of Brahman (*Brahmadṛṣṭi*) and realizes Him in all beings and all beings in Him. Thus its supreme claim consists in its synthetic power and its uniqueness is expressed in its universality. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita Siddhānta* is synthetic in the sense that it defines God as love and the

universe as having its source and sustenance in that love. It is universal in the sense that it has a spiritual appeal to one and all.

Rāmānuja accepts the authority of the ancient and weighty tradition of the *Sūtras* established by *Vēdāntic* teachers like Ṭaṅka, Guhadēva, Dramiḍa, Kapardin and Bhāruci, and follows faithfully their teaching as expounded in the *vṛtti* of Bōdhāyana and the *bhāṣya* of Dramiḍācārya who is referred to as the *Bhāṣyakāra*. He not only recognizes the eternity and self-validity of the *Vēda* but also its integrity as a whole and its all-inclusive authority. The two *Mīmāṃsās* of Jaimini and Bādarāyaṇa are an organic whole which enquire into the connected meaning of the *Vēda*. Rāmānuja considers the *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* philosophy of *karma* or duty as a necessary step to the *Uttara Mīmāṃsā* philosophy of Brahman. Jaimini collects and collates in the sixteen chapters of the *Karma Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* the nature of the *Vēdic* imperative or *dharma*, and leaves it to Bādarāyaṇa to develop in the remaining four chapters of the *Brahma Mīmāṃsā* the full implications of the temporal and logical transition from the enquiry into *karma* to the enquiry into Brahman, and thus thinks together the interrelations of moral and philosophic experience. The *vṛttikāra* also supports the view that the *S'ārīraka* is a continuation of the *Sūtras* of Jaimini. The truths of the *s'ruti* are intuitive and self-valid and are called *pratyakṣa* ; those of the *smṛti*, like the *Bhagavad Gītā* which are deduced from the *s'ruti*, are as valid as the *s'ruti* itself. As the *Pāñcarātra* is the word of God leading to the supreme spiritual goal of godliness, it is as valid as the *Vēda*. The highest proof of the existence of God is the experience of God by godly men. The *Āḻvārs*, like *Vēdic ṛṣis*, had a direct experience of God, and they invite humanity

to share in the joy of their divine life. In an extended sense, the *Vēda* is definable as a body of eternal spiritual truths which are verified and verifiable by spiritual experience, and Rāmānuja's exposition of *s'āstra* thus satisfies the supreme demands of *s'ruti*, *tarka* and *anubhava*. Revelation is an ocean of knowledge, and the *mumukṣu* relies on revelation that is relevant to his spiritual needs, and thus selects only the essentials of *Vēdānta*. This spiritual selection is different from the *Advaitic* method of sublation, which leads eventually to the sublation of the *Vēda* itself. Rāmānuja adopts the *sūtra* method of *samanvaya* in solving the nature of truth which is *vis'vatōmukha* or many-sided. Because truth is comprehensive, it is many-sided, and the many sides point to the same supreme goal of *Bramajñāna*.

While the ancient *ācāryas* accept the self-evident and eternal spiritual truths of the *Vēda* and *Vēdānta*, modern exponents apply the methods of historic and philosophic criticism to scriptural interpretation, and reject the traditional *á priori* way as scholastic or theological, as it subordinates reason to revelation and exposes itself to the fallacies of literalism and dogmatism. To them the *Vēdas* are the compilations of different *ṛṣis* at different times and places and the *Vēdic* period is the age of groping and guessing at God. The transition to the *Upaniṣadic* period marks a gradual historic progression of thought from primitive naturalism, polytheism, and anthropomorphism to henotheism and from henotheism to pantheism and monistic idealism. The leading speculative ideas of the *Upāniṣads* are creative, floating mental possessions and do not hang together. While the earlier *Upaniṣads*, like the *Chāndōgva* are pre-Buddhistic and monistic, the later like the *S'vētās'vatara* are post-Buddhistic and theistic. In

ethics, the *Vēdic ṛta* anticipates the later theory of *karma*. The *Upaniṣads*, on the whole, present divergent and conflicting views, but if they reveal any system at all, it is idealistic monism, and theism is incompatible with this doctrine. In the Epic period, which comes next, intuition gave place to intellectual enquiry. The *Rāmāyaṇa* was at first an epic poem, but it was later changed into a *Vaiṣṇavite* treatise, especially in Books I and VII which are later additions. The *Mahābhārata* is a syncretism or vast mosaic of conflicting beliefs, and it was in this period that Viṣṇu and S'iva were made superior to other gods. The *Gītā* in the story is an adaptation made of the absolutism of the *Upaniṣads* to the popular needs of theism, if not the degeneration of their monistic thought. It is an amalgamation of the pure philosophy of the *Upaniṣads* with the theism of the *Bhāgavata*, whose origin is non-*Vēdic*. The *Gītā* theory of *Puruṣōttama* is a synthesis of being-becoming or the impersonal and the personal, and its theism is only an idealization of Varuṇa worship. The concept of the ten *avatārs* is a symbolic expression of the main stages in the onward march of the world from dust to deity. The *Sūtra* period, which came later, marks the rise of the critical spirit in philosophy and the summarizations of its teachings in the cryptic form of the *Sūtras*. The succeeding scholastic period witnessed the growth of polemic thought employed by dialecticians skilled in the art of logical and verbal warfare. Thus, historically and philosophically, there is a gradual fall from the monism of Yājñavalkya and Uddālaka to the theism of the *S'vētās'vatara* and later deism, and philosophy had to compromise itself with the claims of logical faith, and satisfy the demands of popular religion. Viṣṇu and S'iva who were minor deities in the *Vēdic* pantheon, now became the chief deities of *Vaiṣṇavism* and *S'aivism*. In the *Brāhmaṇa*

period, Viṣṇu emerged into the supreme deity and still later into Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa. The cult of Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa was then blended with that of *Bhagavān*, which was non-*Vēdic* in origin; it was then *brahmanized* and changed into *Vaiṣṇavism*; Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa was then called *Bhagavān* and the *Gītā* identifies Nārāyaṇa with Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān. The theologian Rāmānuja tried to synthesize the conflicting claims of *Upaniṣadic* monism and non-*Vēdic* theism by identifying the Brahman of the *Upaniṣads* with the successive ideas of Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, *Bhagavān* and Kṛṣṇa, and thus reconciled the philosophy of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* with the beliefs of *Vaiṣṇavism* and *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* by fusing together *Vēdāntic* non-dualism, the non-*Vēdic* monotheism of the *Pāñcaratra*, the theism of the *Gītā* and the faith of the Dravidian saints or *Āḷvārs*. Thus it will be seen that while *Advaita* is a pure philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*, *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is a mosaic of many trends of thought, *Upaniṣadic* and non-*Upaniṣadic*. Such, in brief, is the conclusion arrived at by those who apply the critico-historical method to the study of our ancient religious literature.

The application of the above method to the study of *Vēdānta* has, however, neither the definiteness of the time-honoured method of the *ācāryas* nor the disinterestedness associated with the principles of historic and scientific criticism. History describes certain unique events in space and time, and sticks to the particular and the personal, and cannot explain the eternal truths of *Vēdānta*. Besides, we know more about the philosophies than the philosophers, as these authors of old effaced the personal factor in the dissemination of impersonal truths, and it was their invariable practice to begin their teaching thus: "It was said by

them of old," "Thus states the *Vēda.*" The historic origins are lost in sacred mystery. Besides, in *Vēdānta*, the value of a truth is more important than its genesis. The scientific method is different from the conclusions of science, which have no finality, and is not much different from the *Vēdāntic* method. *Vēdānta*, as fully unified knowledge, is more concrete and comprehensive than scientific thought, which is only partially unified. It is the philosophic faith of the *Vēdāntin* that divine truths are divinely revealed and intuited by the *ṛṣis* who were specialists in spirituality. The intuition of Brahman transcends the limits of the logical intellect, though it is the fulfilment of logical thinking. But when the analytic intellect, in the interests of criticism, dissects the living pulsation of intuition, it gives us only dead things and discontinuous bits. It is inadmissible in *Vēdānta* to apply to transcendental truths, the categories which have only an empirical use. The higher alone can explain the lower, and not the lower the higher. *Vēdāntic* truths are true for ever, and have higher value than those given in sense perception, history and even philosophic speculations. While historic criticism may be plausible with regard to historic revelations, which depend on their founders, the eternal foundations of *Vēdānta* stand for ever without the need for any prophets to reveal them or historic witnesses. Even S'rī Kṛṣṇa, the Divine teacher of the *Gītā*, who uses the first personal pronoun more than any other, is content to say that He only finds and formulates an ancient *s'āstraic* truth and does not found it. The eternal and impersonal nature of *s'āstra* is accepted by all schools of *Vēdāntins* who cannot be lightly dismissed as dogmatists and word-worshippers, and they insist on the philosophic faith in the integrity of *s'āstra* as the only source and guide to spiritual knowledge and the need for *Vēdāntic*

discipline as the only way to the realization of Brahman. Every *Vēdāntic* teacher is fully equipped with the knowledge of the canons of *Vēdic* interpretation derived from his encyclopaedic mastery of the *Vēdas* and the *Vedāṅgas* and he claims to be a seer of truth or *tattvadars'ī*. *S'āstra* is an integral whole including the *Vēdas, smṛtis, itihāsas* and *purāṇas*, and it has either to be accepted *in toto* or rejected. The *āstika* deals with *Vēdic* affirmations, and the *nāstika* with the negation of *Vēdic* truths, but the position of the modern exponent, who accepts the *Vēda* like the former and denies its eternity like the latter, is neither clear nor convincing. It is more confusing, when the critic is also a *Vēdāntic* rationalist who affirms the identity philosophy by the denial of dualistic texts. The *mumukṣu* is on safer ground when he treads the ancient path, and seeks the guidance of the *Brahmavādins* who have seen Brahman and can communicate their knowledge to him. *S'ruti* is what is immediately intuited by the *ṛṣis* and *smṛti* is what is inferred from *s'ruti*; the *itihāsas* reveal the epic grandeur of the *avatārs* as redeemers of mankind, and the *purāṇas* bring out the glory of the cosmic order and the sublime revelation of the divine comedy. The *āgamas* are manuals for the practical realization of *Vēdic* truths. But in all cases of conflict and casuistry, the *Vēdāntin* falls back on the fundamental truths of the *Vēda*; he is neither a fundamentalist nor a modernist, but a seeker after eternal truths enshrined in *s'āstra* and verifiable by intuitive experience.

The truth, that all the *Upaniṣads* teach the same coherent system and have the same consistency of logic and intuition, follows from their integrity as a whole in spite of the apparent discrepancies noticed in the *bhēda* texts, *abhēda* texts and texts affirming *bhēdābhēda*. The agreement among the

different *Vēdantic* commentators in ascribing the same topic or *viṣaya-vākya* to each *adhikaraṇa* testifies to the prevalence of a common *Upaniṣadic* tradition among them and the spiritual atmosphere in which they lived. Both S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja agree as to the general drift of the *Sūtras* and the arrangement of the topics. The texts quoted by them are largely from the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* and from the other recognized *Upaniṣads* like the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Kaṭha*, *Kauṣītaki*, *Īs'a*, *Kēna*, *Pras'na*, *Taittirīya*, *Muṇḍaka*, and *S'vētās'vatara*. The systematic exposition of the *Upaniṣads* given by Bādarāyaṇa in the four chapters falls into line with the unity of *Upaniṣadic* import. The first two chapters define the nature of Brahman as the supreme *tattva*, the third chapter expounds the *hita* or the *sādhanas* for knowing Brahman, and the fourth chapter deals with the nature of *mukti* as the supreme *puruṣārtha* or end of life. The *Bhagavad Gītā* contains the cream of *Vēdānta*; and the unity of the teaching of the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā* is further strengthened by the identity of the authorship of the *Mahābhārata* containing the *Gītā* and of the *Vēdānta Sūtras*. Vyāsa, the arranger of the *Vēdas*, the systematizer of the *Upaniṣads* in the *Sūtras* and the synthetic or syncretist author of the epic including the *Gītā*, may be the same *ṛṣi* or different *ṛṣis*; but the Vyāsa genius for synoptic philosophy is clearly discernible in the three principal sources of *Vēdānta*. All the exponents of the *Sūtras* including S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja accept the three *prasthānas* as equally valid and valuable, deal with the same ultimate problems of philosophy, and adopt the traditional method of exposition with the aid of *nyāya*, *mīmāṃsā* and *vyākaraṇa*.

Though S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja agree that the supreme end and aim of the *Vēdāntin* as *mumukṣu* is to know Brahman and

thus attain freedom from ignorance and misery, and they bring out this truth in their exposition of the *prasthānas*, their conclusions are divergent, if not discrepant. As each *siddhānta* is enriched by a criticism of rival systems, a knowledge of the outlines of *Advaita* is presupposed in understanding *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* ; and a brief summary of the former may serve as a critical introduction to the latter. *Brahmajñāna* in *Advaita* is *jñāna* that *is* Brahman and not *of* Brahman, and is therefore pure consciousness (*nirvis'ēṣa cinmātra*) which simply is and cannot be described, as it transcends or sublates relational thought. But as a philosophy, it has to establish this truth, and it does so in a negative way by denying false knowledge or *ajñāna*. Owing to *avidyā*, the *ātman*, which is pure consciousness, mistakes itself for *anātman* as the shell is mistaken for silver, and this leads to *adhyāsa* or the superimposition of *anātman* on *ātman*. Owing to *māyā* which is *avidyā* in its objective or cosmic aspect, the world of *nāma-rūpa* is superposed on Brahman, and therefore appears to be real. How the real co-exists with the unreal and is conjoined with it is the crux of monistic metaphysics. The problem is admitted, but the solution is that it somehow exists there, indeterminable philosophically. But the problem is dissolved when *ajñāna* is sublated by *jñāna* in the state of *Brahma nirvāṇa* or pure consciousness just as one thorn is used to remove another and both are thrown away afterwards. Pure consciousness is eternal or timeless, effulgent, beyond the subject-object consciousness and thus absolutely transcends the relation of the enjoyer or *bhōktā* and the object enjoyed or *bhōgya*. It is *sat*, *cit*, *ānanda* not in the adjectival sense but as absolute experience realized in *jīvanmukti*. Really speaking there is no *mumukṣu* or *mukta*, as the *jiva* is ever identical with Brahman. *Mumukṣutva* is, in a sense, a process of negating negation by eliminating the false

by renouncing the pleasures of sensibility and by transcending the *vṛttis*. The only *sādhana* is the sublation of the dual consciousness of *avidyā* by the awakening of non-dual consciousness. *Vidyā* shines by itself when *avidyā* is dispelled. Reality transcends relational thought and difference. Then the One remains without a second, ever self-effulgent and as infinite bliss.

But as only a few can rise to the heights of *Advaitic* experience and its world-negating logic, S'aṅkara, following *s'ruti*, recognizes the principle of *adhikāribhēda* and *s'ākhā-candra nyāya*, and adapts his teaching to the needs of the popular consciousness. The aspirant is led gradually from truth to higher truth till the highest is self-realized. The religious consciousness is the nearest approach to *Advaita* and a distinction is drawn between *parā vidyā* and *aparā vidyā*. The former refers to the esoteric knowledge of *nirguṇa* Brahman and the need for the stultification of *avidyā* and *adhyāsa* by the intuition of the self-identity of Brahman or *aparōkṣa jñāna*. But the latter describes the exoteric knowledge of *saguṇa* Brahman as the supreme cause of the universe and the need for attaining Brahman in the world yonder by means of *upāsanā* or *bhakti*. Thus from the practical or *vyāvahārika* point of view, the theist is fully justified when he posits the reality of *jagat*, *jīva* and *Īs'vara* or nature, self and God on the basis of *s'āstra*, insists on moral and spiritual discipline as essential steps to salvation and regards *bhakti* and *kaiṅkarya* as the supreme end of spiritual life. But this dualistic view is itself a stage and not a stopping place and it is transcended in the experience of *Advaita*. Though S'aṅkara is theoretically an uncompromising *Advaitin*, he is tolerant enough to recognize the needs of the empirically-minded. In

his theory of *aparā vidyā* he provides for the ignorant-minded by conceding the phenomenal existence of *saguṇa* Brahman as the cosmic goal of the *jīva* and the truth of *krama-mukti*. But when the *adhikārī* rises to the *pāramārthika* level of *parā vidyā*, he is fit for the knowledge of *nirguṇa* Brahman and *jīvanmukti* by the sublation of *avidyā* and by becoming a *jīvanmukta*.

Some modern expositors of *Advaita*, European as well as Indian, who apply the methods of philosophic criticism to the study of *Vēdānta* do not clearly define the boundary line between Buddhism, *Advaita*, *Bhēdābhēda* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. Deussen, for example, is so much drawn by the identity philosophy expressed in the equation "Thou art That," that he feels philosophically constrained to separate metaphysics from exoteric religion and thus free S'aṅkara from his theological bias which obliges him to compromise with commonsense and ignorance and to refer to two standpoints. To him, the fundamental want of *Vēdānta* or *Advaita* is the absence of proper morality such as is found in the Christian ideal of human brotherhood and of the lack of the solution of what corresponds to the theological faith in the saving grace of God. But in his desire to synthesize reason and will and in the theory of *unio mystico*, he drifts unconsciously into the views of *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* and *ēkībhāva* of Bhāskara. Gough wrongly thinks that S'aṅkara is the generally recognized expositor of the true *Vēdāntic* doctrine traditionally handed down to him by a line of teachers from the age of the *S'ūtrakāra* and that there existed from the beginning only one *Vēdāntic* doctrine agreeing in all essential points with *Advaita*. But he concludes that it is a philosophy of stagnation favouring a life of inertia and void, and that it is an empty intellectual abstraction

devoid of spirituality and of the virility of western thought. A large portion of the western criticism of *Vēdānta* is directed against pan-illusionism and the reflection theory, and the absence of proper morality. This is mainly due to a confused understanding of the relations between *Mādhyamika* Buddhism, *Yōga* practice and *Māyāvāda* and the alliance between intellectual monism and atheistic Buddhism against the main currents of Indian life.

In a critical investigation of the teaching of the *Sūtras* based on a comparative study of the commentaries of S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja, Thibaut thinks that he is able to judge for himself the general drift of the text without the aid of scholiasts who often strain the texts to suit their pre-conceived *siddhānta*, and concludes that the system of Bādarāyaṇa agrees more with that of the theologian Rāmānuja than with that of S'aṅkara with his two standpoints. The *Upaniṣads* are so conflicting that no coherent theory can be evolved from them; the *Sūtras* may not set forth the same doctrine as the *Upaniṣads*, and S'aṅkara is not anxious to strengthen his own case by appeal to ancient authorities. But if the task of systematization is once given, S'aṅkara's system is probably the best and safest that can be devised. It represents orthodox Brahminical theology at its best and is alone called *Vēdānta*, and no other system can compare with it in boldness, depth and subtlety of speculation. But *Advaita* is too little in sympathy with the wants of the human heart; and the system of Rāmānuja influenced by the *Bhāgavata* school and the *Bhagavad Gītā* alone satisfies the needs of love. After having assigned the *Upaniṣads* to S'aṅkara and the *Sūtras* to Rāmānuja, Thibaut suggests a synthetic view of some "other commentator," who may be

Bhāskara. According to other interpreters of *Advaita*, it is only a non-dualism that denies difference and not a monism that affirms identity; the illusion theory is audacious but not adequate, and should give place to the view that the world of space and time has phenomenal reality and is not fictitious, and that Brahman can be intuited and not conceived by the logical intellect. Still others rely on the adequacy of reason to understand *Advaita* without seeking the aid of revelation and intuition, and think that by the analysis of the three states of consciousness, especially of sleep, duality is sublated and pure consciousness is self-established. Extreme idealists accept only *ēka-jīva*, deny the objective order and the religious consciousness of a Thou or *Īs'vara* and conclude that the inner seer of *dṛk* is alone real and absolute.

If, as the *Advaitins* generally say, S'aṅkara came to establish religions and not to eliminate them finally, then it is not clear whether his attitude to religions was one of compromise, condescension or synthetic understanding. The view that his *siddhānta* is not the rejection of religious values but is based on the ideal that truth admits of a passage from truth to more truth is commendable but not satisfactory. It is not consistent with the philosophy of sublation, as there is really no middle ground between *satya* and *mithyā*. The spirit of compromise has no place in philosophy, especially if it is to accommodate itself to ignorance. The view that there is a *Vēdāntic* ladder from *Dvaita* to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and finally to *Advaita* as the highest stage savours of the spirit of condescension arising from the sense of superiority complex.[1] This tendency is clearly discernible in their comparative estimate

[1] The *Sarva Dars'ana Saṅgraha* of Mādhavācārya describes sixteen systems in an ascending order and gives the highest place to *Advaita*.

of *Advaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. *Nirguṇa* Brahman is said to be the intuitional highest, and *saguṇa* Brahman the highest conceptual reading of the Absolute, and the logical highest. God is made in man's image and is less than the Godhead and to speak of the world of Brahman is to limit in terms of space and time what is infinite and eternal. Rāmānuja is therefore only in the level of theology and theism, and he does not rise to the level of *Advaita jñāna*. His view is an amalgam of *Upaniṣadic* monism, the theism of the *Pāñcarātra* which is anti-*Vēdic*, and the emotionalism of the Dravidian saints or *Āḷvārs*, and therefore it has not the philosophic dignity and integrity of *Advaita*. But as it satisfies the aspirations of the religious consciousness of the ignorant man, it is pragmatically plausible and true. This method of approach is open to serious objections and cannot be accepted. On the other hand the theory of dual standpoints involves S'aṅkara in the dualism between *jñāna* and *avidyā* and defeats the purpose of non-dualism. If *Advaita* is identity-consciousness, then no philosophy or religion can be strictly deduced from it; such a deduction is purely dogmatic. But if it should satisfy the needs of philosophy and religion and the highest values of life, it should come into line with *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*.

The problem of *Vēdānta* is stated thus: "What is that One by knowing which all things are known?" S'aṅkara solves it by saying that Brahman only is real and therefore *jagat* is false, and that falsity is stultified by *Brahmajñāna* or *jñāna* that is identical with Brahman. *Avidyā* causes the sense of difference and plurality, and by the removal of *avidyā*, Brahman is known to be identical with itself. Rāmānuja answers the same problem by his theory that, as Brahman is the All-Self

or *s'arīrin* of the world of *cit* and *acit*, by knowing Him, the world, His *s'arīra* or *prakāra*, is also known. *Īs'vara*, is the Absolute and not a lapse from it. Since Brahman is real as the All-Self, all things and thoughts are equally real. The world is a living expression of the Infinite and not an illusory phantom. If *jñāna* is pure consciousness without a self to illumine it and an object to be illuminated by it, it is a soulless, bloodless abstraction ; and it would lapse into the unconscious. *Brahma-jñāna* therefore means the *jñāna of* Brahman *by* the freed self who intuits Him in all beings and all beings in Him. This is true knowledge, and truth is an immanent standard which is fully realized only when the absolute or Brahman is realized. With Rāmānuja, reality and value go together. Brahman as Supreme Reality is also the home of eternal values such as truth, goodness, beauty and bliss ; Brahman is therefore defined as the ground of all existents and the goal of all experients. This knowledge is the *alpha* and the *omega* of the *Brahma Sūtras*. He is the All-Self that is in all things but not as all things, and is therefore immanent in the world of nature as the causal order, having *pariṇāmic* changes, and at the same time transcendent, as He is beyond the moral order, free from the imperfections of *karma*. This view remedies the defects of deism and immanentism. The perfect enters into the imperfect with a view to perfecting it and imparting its nature to it. This is the *līlā* of love which is not a mystery like the *Advaita* theory of *avidyā*, but a reality which the mystic realizes. The self is an eternal entity like the All-Self, but at the same time, it is an irradiation of the supreme Light, the Light of the universe. It is a monad and a mode, and has substantive and adjectival existence. This *jīva* is not a mere self-subsisting exclusive entity, as it has its meaning and life only in Brahman.

While the *jīva* is infinitesimal like a spark, its intelligence is all-pervasive and can know all things if it is freed from *karma*. When the philosopher turns *mumukṣu*, he recollects his divine heritage and by moral and spiritual discipline sheds his *avidyā* and *ahaṅkāra*, intuits the absolute and enjoys eternal bliss. Thus *Vēdānta* points to Brahman as the only source and security of the self or *jīva* which is subject to the ills of *avidyā* and *karma*. The *vidvān* knows Brahman and works for world-welfare and for the attainment of Brahman by all.

Thus, in their *siddhānta*, S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja have fundamental differences as regards *s'āstraic* authority, ontology and the destiny of the self. S'aṅkara applies the Occam's razor of sublation to all branches of study and even the *Vēda* is stultified in the transcendental self-identity of Brahman. But to Rāmānuja, the *Vēda* leads the aspirant step by step to the supreme goal. *S'āstra* is a body of eternal truths which are verified by *ṛṣis* and *Āḷvārs ;* the very word of God revealed in the *Pāñcarātra* is realized in the Tamil *Prabandha*. Thus he synthesizes revelation, reason and intuition and recognizes the full value of *Vāda* as a disinterested pursuit of Truth without *jalpa* or *vitaṇḍā* and as a divine quality.[1] In his ontology Rāmānuja postulates that Brahman is the Absolute of metaphysics and *Bhagavān* or God of religion and he rejects the theory of two Brahmans on the ground that *s'āstra* nowhere accepts God at first with a view to denying His existence later. S'aṅkara's cosmology is ultimately merged in psychology and subjectivism. But to Rāmānuja Brahman is the Self of the universe and the Self of the *ātman*, and the *mumukṣu* meditates on Brahman as the world-ground with a view to avoiding

[1] *Bhagavad Gītā*, X. 32.

the perils of subjectivism and the ego-centric feeling. As regards the finite self, S'aṅkara posits its monadic nature and moral freedom by following the *Sūtras*, and then explains it away as a mere appearance or illusion. The reality of the self as *jivātmā* and *Paramātmā* is insisted on by Rāmānuja ; but they are treated as mere appearances of the Absolute by S'aṅkara. While S'aṅkara explains *mukti* as the knowledge of the self-identity of Brahman by the removal of the self-contradictions of *jīva-Īs'vara*, Rāmānuja, recognizing the full value of moral and spiritual discipline, expounds *mukti* as the direct apprehension and attainment of Brahman and as freedom from embodiment and not in embodiment, and from the whole phenomenal series of space-time and the fetters of *karma*.

In all crucial cases in the textual and philosophic exposition of the *Vēdānta Sūtras*, like the topics on the nature of Brahman as *ānandamaya*, on cosmic evolution and on the *jīva* and its destiny, Rāmānuja faithfully follows the *Sūtrakāra* ; but S'aṅkara first accepts the *Sūtras* and then rejects their direct meaning on independent grounds by his all-destroying concept of *nirguṇa* Brahman, *vivartavāda* and *jīvanmukti*. The main object of Rāmānuja in his *siddhānta* is to join issue with S'aṅkara in his dialectic speculation, by appeal to *s'āstra*, the rules of *Mīmāṃsā* and logic and secular and spiritual experience and to repudiate the theory of two Brahmans, the two cosmic ideas of *pariṇāma* and *vivarta* and the two kinds of *mukti* and to establish the unity of *Vēdāntic* knowledge. He is entirely opposed to dogmatism as he insists on the integrity of the *pramāṇas* as a whole. In contemporary Indian philosophy, *Vēdānta* is overweighted on the side of *Advaita* ; and the balance will be restored only when the other systems of *Vēdānta*, notably that of Rāmānuja, are widely known and

appreciated in the west as well as in the east. A comparative study of *Vēdānta* is essential to the understanding of Indian culture and its synthetic genius, and this can be best achieved by a knowledge of the fundamental features of *Vēdānta* as a whole. But before this task is attempted, it is necessary that *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* comes to its own in the world of modern *Vēdāntic* thought as a *siddhānta* as well as synthesis. The method adopted in this work is both critical and constructive; it is based on an appeal to conviction and not to credulousness and is the time-honoured method of Indian philosophy, which consists in the establishment of one's *siddhānta* by the refutation of opposing theories which are called *pūrva pakṣas*.

The concluding chapter, however, adopts the synthetic method and considers the points of convergence between the main schools of *Vēdānta*. What is called synthesis in philosophy is equivalent to the unifying power of love in religion. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is the meeting ground of the extremes in philosophy like monism and pluralism, and has the intrinsic value of containing what is true, good and beautiful in other systems, though it rejects what contradicts its essentials. It accepts the practical *Advaita* of S'aṅkara as a *Brahmavādin* who follows the way of ethical religion as opposed to the *Māyāvāda* of pure *Advaita* with its leanings towards the negative method of Nāgārjuna. It also supports *Vēdāntic* theism in so far as its metaphysical theory of *Bhēdavāda* supports mysticism. The principles of *Sāṅkhyan* psychology, the ethical discipline contained in the *yōgic sādhanas*, the *Nyāya* view that the study of the *pramāṇas* or organon of knowledge is essential to philosophic construction and the *Mīmāṃsā* theory of the primacy of *dharma* or duty are the living truths of the

six *dars'anas* and they naturally fit into the scheme of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita.* It may even include in its sweep the philanthropic ideas of Jainism and Buddhism if they go far enough and accept their *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* background. There can be no metaphysics without physics ; physics has its completion in the psychology of the self. Psychology leads to ethics, and ethics has its meaning only in religion. Thus in *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* all these sciences are vitally related and related to philosophy as a whole. *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* religion has no objection to other religions if they accept the immanence of Vāsudēva in all gods and in all faiths. With its loyalty to the *Upaniṣads* as the source of wisdom, the *Sūtras* as their philosophical criterion and the *Gītā* as the crown of spirituality, it enters into the soul of humanity and extends the hospitality of love to all sects. If *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is reinterpreted in terms of modern thought without doing violence to its essentials, it is sure to throw fresh light on the vexed problems of to-day including even the economic, political and educational ideals and to remedy the ills of humanity. This work is a humble attempt at presenting the central features of the philosophy of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as an introduction to its detailed study.

The study of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* will be found to have immense value even to the western thinker who is deeply interested in philosophy, which is speculative as well as spiritual and synthetic. The problem of philosophy is formulated in a threefold way by Kant—What can I know ? What should I do ? What may I hope for ? His three critiques dealing with the examination of theoretic reason, morality and aesthetics fail to offer any solution. The first concludes that one can know only the phenomena or the appearances of Reality and not Reality itself and it leads to agnosticism and scepticism. The

second postulates the freedom of the will, immortality of the self and the existence of God as a moral necessity ; but it creates a wide gulf between reason and feeling and makes the moral law formal and empty. The third recognizes the importance of aesthetic imagination ; but it also suffers from the abstract method. The chief successors of Kant, namely, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, think that Reality can be explained. Hegel identifies logic with ontology and makes Reality rational ; but his panlogism has the defects of mere intellectualism. Fichte stresses the ethical side of Kant when he explains philosophy in terms of acts of will as opposed to facts of knowledge, but his idealism is mere progressivism without any finality. Schelling expounds the nature of the Absolute in terms of artistic creation and intellectual intuition ; but his pantheism does not fully satisfy the demands of aesthetic philosophy. Thus the answers to the three problems given by the three idealist philosophers are also fractional and abstract and liable to the defects of intellectualism, voluntarism and emotional mysticism ; and they tend to explain away the facts of error, evil and ugliness. *Viśiṣṭādvaita* is free from their one-sidedness as it co-ordinates thought or theoretic reason, will or morality and feeling or aesthetics, synthesizes the values of truth, goodness and beauty and harmonizes all contradictions. It furnishes the true philosophic justification for the dominant interest in contemporary philosophy in integrating all kinds of knowledge. The tendency in western thought to-day is the increasing good-will between science and philsoophy by avoiding the evils of sectional thinking and sterile speculation, the rapprochement between realism and idealism by overcoming the defects of materialism and mentalism, the reconciliation of religion and philosophy by giving up the pitfalls of dogmatism and scepticism and recognizing the

innate spirituality of man. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is a synoptic philosophy *par excellence* as it solves the agelong problems of life and furnishes an inspiring motive for the meeting of the east and the west in philosophy and promoting inter-religious understanding.

CHAPTER I

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

VIS'IṢṬĀDVAITA is neither pure philosophy nor pure religion, but is really a philosophy of religion. As such, it offers a contrast, on the one hand, to mere philosophical speculation on the whole of reality, especially of the western type, and, on the other hand, to religion in the sense of a faith in revealed theology based on the evidence of miracles. Theology insists on dogmatic faith in truths regarded as infallible on account of scriptural authority or divine disclosure, and is therefore antagonistic to the free exercise of reason on the facts provided by human experience. Philosophy revolts against slavish allegiance to the dictatorship of dogmatic theology. It insists on the critical examination of all facts and doctrines at the bar of reason and criticizes and clarifies ideas which are accepted uncritically. Rāmānuja's system of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* recognizes the claims of both faith and reason and aims at harmonizing or reconciling them by admitting a free play of reason not only on the data of sense-perception and inference, but also on the spiritual intuition or *anubhava* of the great seers and the doctrines or views recorded in the scriptures.

The friction between faith and philosophy is sought to be removed by some thinkers by defining and restricting their spheres and by assigning to the former the realm of the supernatural and to the latter the world of nature. But the frontier

line between the two realms is hazy and arbitrary, and increases the tension instead of relieving it. The conflict between faith and philosophy is mainly due to the difference in their method of approach or enquiry. Faith claims finality, and, when it is supported by reason working in a subordinate capacity as its handmaid, it becomes dogmatic. When dogma is crystallized by tradition and sanctified by the worship of the word, it claims absolute allegiance ; faith then ends in fanaticism. Philosophy, on the other hand, rejects the way of faith, accepts only the guidance of reason, and follows its conclusions, whatever they may be. But it often starts with doubting everything, and ends also with doubts without offering any solution to the problems posed by it. The natural light of reason often suffers from the perils of free thinking and leads to atheism. Theology, therefore, condemns its guidance and takes refuge in faith. This conflict between faith and philosophy will cease only if they retrace their steps and become reconciled in a true philosophy of religion.

The warfare between scientific and secular thought on one side and religious and supersensuous knowledge on the other is waged in five different regions with varying results. The first stage is that of the tension between naturalism and supernaturalism ; the second is that of the collision between vitalism and animism. The third is that of the opposition between mentalism and anthropomorphism. Next comes the controversy between rationalism and theology in their answers to the question of the nature of reality. The fifth or last stage of conflict is in the region where intuition and revealed religion confront each other as irreconcilable enemies. A few words of explanation may be necessary for a clearer and fuller understanding of this five-fold conflict.

The points at issue between naturalism and supernaturalism may be considered first. Natural science has no doubts in thinking that its realm of enquiry, namely, that of matter, is alone worth while, and it rejects theological doctrines as the flights of fancy. The scientific thinker, who explains the facts given in sense-perception, turns realist when he traces the source of knowledge solely to the external world. He is a naturalist affirming the priority and primacy of matter and an upholder of the truth of *svabhāva-vāda.* To him matter alone is real and mind is, as it were, a by-product of matter and a late arrival in the world-process. The world of nature is a series of physico-chemical changes. Life evolves out of non-living matter. Consciousness and self-consciousness emerge, in the course of evolution through the ages, from the primordial physical stuff. All changes in nature should be explained naturally and not supernaturally. The universe of space-time moves endlessly in a soulless, mechanical way and without any purpose or design, because it is its *svabhāva* or nature to do so. The atomic theory, for instance, traces the universe to the existence of primordial atoms and their varied combinations. Even the beliefs of the mind arise out of the dance, so to speak, of the atoms in the brain. Moral freedom is a fiction, and spiritual craving a disease of the brain. Religious faith may be traced to fear or the aberrations caused by the suppression of instincts. Natural science finds no proof or evidence for the existence of God and rejects the belief in a god as an unnecessary hypothesis.

The *Cārvāka* or the Indian materialist, is even more thorough in his repudiation of religion than the western

naturalist. He accepts only the immediate evidence of sense-preception and rejects the validity of inference or *anumāna* as well as the seer's or *yōgin's* sense of the supernatural. True knowledge is, according to the *Cārvāka*, given only in sense-perception which refers to the here and now. The universal or *vyāpti* can never be derived from the particulars of sense-perception or *pratyakṣa-jñāna*. The world of nature is made up of four *bhūtas* or elements, earth, water, fire and air, and it alone is real. The so-called *ātman* is only an aggregate of these elements, and it is dissolved with the dissolution of the body at the time of death. Mind emerges from the combination of elements even as the red colour does when the betel leaf, the arecanut and lime are chewed together. It is only a function of matter. Sense-perception being the only test of truth, there is no evidence of the survival of a soul after death. The *Cārvāka* holds that pleasure is the end of conduct and the sole aim of life. The *Vēda* is false and of no validity and appeals only to the ignorant mind. There is no heaven nor hell, and *mukti* or release cannot mean anything but death. Virōcana, the king of the Asuras, is on the level of the *Cārvāka* when he accepts the identification of the *ātman* with the body.[1]

Materialism, western as well as eastern, is common sense in a thinking mood. As the protest of science against superstition, it may have some significance; but the religious consciousness is outraged by its denial of moral and spiritual values. The immediate reaction of the religious consciousness to materialism is faith in the supernatural. The religious nature is apt to exclaim: "Even if God does not exist, He

[1] sa ha s'āntaḥṛdaya ēva virōcanō'surāñjagāma tēbhyō haitāmupaniṣadam prōvāca || (*Ch. Upan.*, Chap. VII, Khaṇḍa 8.)

has to be invented for the satisfaction of faith and the conservation of moral values." Faith distrusts the evidence of sense-perception and reason as they are not infallible. It believes, even regardless of reason, in a spiritual universe of which the visible and tangible world is only a part. Beyond the natural, there is a realm of the supernatural. There is a 'more' that controls man from without and often frustrates all his calculations. The mechanical view of the uniformity of nature which is the cardinal principle of materialistic science is discarded in favour of belief in the miraculous and in the suspension of the natural law by the intervention of supernatural agencies. These exercise a mysterious control over man's destiny and often overturn his expectations. The believer in the supernatural may be a monotheist, but is more often a polytheist. He believes in the saving power of prayer and propitiation by means of sacrifices and expects to be rewarded for his acts of propitiation.

The contest between naturalism and supernaturalism is of value in so far as it leads to a recognition of the fact that matter is real, though the materialistic outlook is false. It is clear also that a metaphysical system cannot be built on the foundations of the physico-chemical sciences and mathematics. Polytheism, crass or refined, cannot satisfy the demand of reason for unity and the ethical claims of righteousness. The polytheistic heaven is often soiled by ugly passions and unrighteous wars. Its pleasures, too, are perishing and, in their result, painful. The faith in miracles demoralizes the believer and attributes caprice to the divine nature.

The next phase in the conflict of reason and faith is that between vitalism and animism. Vitalism accepts the

primacy of reason, and denies the validity of faith; but it repudiates the mechanistic view of life. According to vitalism, as held by biological thinkers, life is a higher category than matter. It is autonomous and is not originated from matter or externally determined in any other way. Life cannot be explained by mere physico-chemical changes, as it is *sui generis*, having the power of spontaneity and self-emergence. Nature is alive and has the activities of moving and changing. It is self-sustained and possesses persistence and variation. It can reproduce and multiply itself. The vitalist-philosopher who reflects on the conclusions of biological science considers the essence of reality as a vital essence, entelechy or *elan vital*. Life is an inner creative activity, according to him, or an entelechy midway between the physical thing and the mental process since it does not act *in* space, but acts *into* it. This primal principle or impulse contains the potency of the later growth into plant, animal and man. Life breaks up and blends and becomes more life. Reality is, therefore, creative evolution, though the practical intellect, in trying to understand it, mechanizes its spontaneity. The intellect spatializes the free flow of life and makes sections of it; but the philosophic seer should intuit the inner creative urge in nature and not be misled by the mechanizing intellect. But philosophy as vitalism cannot satisfy the thinker. The category of life which it postulates is only the result of speculative activity and may be useful in secular life. The religious consciousness cannot accept vitalism and it protests against this view by opposing to it the theories of animism and *prāṇaism*.

Animism attributes life and divinity to nature. It assumes different froms such as metempsychosis, fetichism, totemism and

spiritism. Every natural object is looked upon as animate and endowed with a spirit. This spirit survives after death in a disembodied state. Animism often deifies the spirits of the dead who become objects of worship. The divine spirit may be encased in metals and even in pebbles. *Prāṇaism* posits the pre-eminence of *prāṇa* or the life-breath as the life-giving deity in the universe. It is illustrated in the well-known story of the *Upaniṣads* of the deities of speech, sound, sight, mind and *prāṇa* contending for supremacy in the maintenance of the body. While the first four left the body, it continued alive; but when *prāṇa* attempted to leave the body, it tore, as it were, the *indriyas* or senses from the body along with itself. The other deities were then obliged to acknowledge the supremacy of *Prāṇa*.[1] "*Prāṇa* is the sum-total of the physical and mental forces in the universe resolved to their original state." By controlling it everything else is controlled also. *Mukhya-prāṇa* is the deity that leads the freed soul back to its home in the world of Brahman and is worthy of adoration. The *Pratardana Vidyā* of the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* refers to meditations on *prāṇa*, which the *pūrvapakṣin* or objector identifies as the primal source of all sentient and non-sentient beings.[2]

Vis'iṣṭādvaita is opposed to both the philosophy of vitalism and the religion of animism. Reality is life, but the category of life does not exhaust the whole range of reality; and the highest moral and spiritual values of experience

[1] athaḥ prāṇa uccikramiṣan sa vāthāsuhayaḥ ṣaḍvis'as'aṅkūn saṅkhidēd ēvam itarān prāṇān samakhidat tam hābhisamētya ūcur Bhagavannēdhi tvam nas' s'reṣṭhōsi mā utkramīriti, (*Ch. Up.*, V, i. 12), tasminnutkrāmatyatbētarē sarva ēva utkrāmantē tasmins'ca prathiṣṭhamānē sarva ēva prātiṣṭhantē tē prītāḥ prāṇam stunvanti (*Pras'nōpaniṣad*, II, 4.) tē hō'cur mā bhagava utkaramīr na vai s'akṣyāmas tvad ṛtē jīvitum iti. (*Br. Up.*, VI. i. 13.)

[2] prāṇō'smi prajñātmā tam mām āyur amṛtam ityupāsva (*Kauṣi.Up.*, III

cannot be adequately expressed by living cells and protoplasm. *Vēdānta* does not accept animism in any form as true religion and the term *prāṇa* in the *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad* connotes not the vital breath or vital principle but the absolute Brahman as the life of our life. True religion begins with theism and not with animism. To identify *arcā* or image worship with fetichism betrays ignorance and scientific prejudice, as the *arcā* is the incarnation of the infinite in the finite. The category of life or *prāṇa* has, however, a vital influence in religious experience, though the vivifying power comes from the *Paramātman* or Supreme Self who is the life of all life. The conflict between vitalism and animism is continued and carried on in a higher plane as sensationalism *versus* anthropomorphism, which, as has already been pointed out, is the third phase of the struggle.

Reality, according to sensationalism, is not to be explained mechanically or biologically, but as a mental continuum or stream of psychic presentations. Buddhism is, in some of its forms, of the nature of sensationalism. Consciousness is *sui generis* and not an emergence from matter and life according to it. The materialist errs in thinking that mind evolves and emerges from matter. External objects are not self-existent substances having extra-mental reality, but are only a cluster of atomic sensations or configurations. There is no substance like matter or self forming the substratum of sensations. The self is only a stream of perceptions and a series of psychic states. Likewise there are no data by which the existence of God can be demonstrated. From the genetic point of view, the faith in a future world and in religion may be traced to the fear of death and the passion for revenge. Buddhism, as a psychological theory of reality, denies the permanence

of the self and holds the view that consciousness is only momentary and that the soul is only a stream of successive presentations. The so-called *ātman* or self is a complex of form, feeling, will and thought and is a fleeting flux. The theory of an enduring self is a delusion.

Psychology is descriptive and it does not accept the metaphysical view of a psyche or self. Consciousness is a mere continuum without a self. The so-called subject is a series of momentary mental states and is not a metaphysical entity. The mental process is a ceaseless becoming, and permanence is an illusion. The religious consciousness is explained psychologically as the effect of psycho-physical degeneration like hysteria and sexual morbidity. Closely allied to this denial of the existence of a psyche or soul and of God is the view held by certain modern thinkers that there is an innate tendency in man to create a God and to attribute to Him qualities which belong to himself. Many psychologists trace the origin of the religious feeling to this anthropomorphic tendency. As examples of anthropomorphism, we may consider the two types described by Orientalists in their study of the evolution of religion. The lower type is exemplified in their description of the development of the Āryan religion, and represents the God-making process that is in human nature. God is made in the image of man and invested with the feelings and motives of the votary. "If oxen and horses could paint like men they would paint Gods as oxen and horses." In the earlier stages the powers of nature were personified and deified into distinct gods with supernatural powers and were often combined by a process of syncretism. Anthropomorphism has affinities to the myth-making tendency of primitive religion, which consists in organizing them

into a pantheon. Polytheism develops into henotheism when it exalts a departmental deity into a supreme god and ends in monotheism. Man fulfils a design in life and it is anologically inferred that there is a cosmic designer or God. In the process of deification, relapse is as common as progress, *e.g.*, it is said that in the *Vēdic* pantheon Varuṇa and Brahmā were at first idealized and elevated into the supreme heights of monotheism and pantheism respectively and were later somehow dethroned and replaced by other gods. The *Vēdic* Rudra has now evolved into the Rudra S'iva of S'aivism who is both an angry and an auspicious deity. Likewise, the worship of the *Vēdic* deity Viṣṇu is fused with the Nārāyaṇa cult and the Vāsudēva cult and has now become the Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa religion of Vaiṣṇavism. The story of the *avatārs* of Viṣṇu is the *purāṇic* way of tracing the evolutionary ascent of man from the sub-human levels and zoomorphic incarnations. While this God-making tendency is common to the Āryan mind, the Semitic race is stated always to have retained a higher anthropomorphic and monotheistic level. Its essential faith is the reverse of the crasser type, as it holds that man is made in the image of God and not God in the image of man.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita rejects the psychological view of reality as inadequate and unsatisfactory. The postulation of a mental series without an enduring self behind it is self-contradictory. Being is always presupposed in the process of becoming. The view that consciousness is momentary and perishing fails to explain the reality of the persistence of the self based upon personal identity. The self is not a mere aggregate of the five *skandhas*, but is a permanent subject which makes possible the synthetic unity of different sensations. The

sensationlistic view would lead to nihilism as is illustrated in the history of European thought in the transition from Locke to Hume. The critico-historic method of the psychologists applied to the evolution of religion oversteps its limits and militates against the integrity of religious experience. No religious man would accept the view that he makes God in his own image. The theory that *Vēdic* polytheism grows into *Upaniṣadic* pantheism and relapses again into the theism of the *Gīṭa* is a dogmatic assertion based on illegitimate speculation. Religious truths are supersensuous and eternal and they cannot be discerned wholly by historic judgments which apply only to events in sense-perception. The true *Vēdic* method is spiritual instruction according to the qualification and needs of the aspirant or *adhikārin*. This is well brought out in the teaching of Varuṇa to Bhṛgu and of Sanatkumāra to Nārada.[1] The *Vēdānta Sūtras*, accepted by all the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy, afford the true insight into *Vēdic* religion when they explain the worship of the different *Vēdic* gods as that of their inner self or *antaryāmin*, who is the supreme Brahman. The object of *Vēdānta* is to raise man to the level of God. The finite is to be infinitized and not the Infinite humanized. True religion is therefore not a nature-religion but is a self-revelation of God to the self with a view to perfect it. The idea that religious faith is induced by the psychological conditions of life like fear, anger and sex is beside the mark, as religious consciousness is spiritual and not sensual. The conflict between philosophy and religion is not reconciled on the mental level, but it is carried on in the higher plane of reason, as the warfare between rationalism and belief.

[1] *Taitt. Up.*, Bhṛguvalli and *Ch. Up.*, Ch. VII.

The fourth phase of the contest between philosophy and faith has been referred to as that between rationalism and theology. Reason marks the transition in knowledge from consciousness to self-consciousness, and the rationalist employs the logical method of determining truth in a clear and distinct way. Metaphysics, according to the rationalist, is based upon physics and is not hostile to it. The distinction between science and philosophy is only in the range of unified knowledge and not in their method. Both throw off the fetters of theology and strike into the path of free enquiry. The rationalist's position may be described as follows:

Philosophy seeks the liberation of thought from the tyranny of dogmatic theology and it is the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake founded on the inner light of reason and reflection. It is a process of self-criticism freed from subjection to external authority and its method is rationalistic on account of its acceptance of reason as the highest authority in the acquisition of truth. The mind should be freed from the prejudices arising from what Bacon calls the idols of the tribe, the den, the market and the theatre. By doubting and destroying every received or inherited opinion or belief, it is possible to reconstruct knowledge and make it coherent. It is the task of philosophy as an intellectual enquiry into the whole of reality to frame the ultimate problems of life. Of the three persistent problems of philosophy, namely, those of God, nature and the self, the enquiry into the nature of God is the most valuable. The existence of God is established by the well-known theistic proofs and not by revealed theology. The teleological argument infers from the beauty and goodness in the universe the existence of a world architect. The universe is purposeful and requires a designer. Creation is the

workmanship of a wise God. The cosmological argument employs the idea of causation and proves God as the first cause that exists *per se*. As the *Naiyāyika* or logician says, the world is an effect and must have been produced by an agent or controller called *Īśvara*. Everything that exists is produced and should refer to a Being that is the real ground of all things. The ontological argument consists in showing that the idea of a perfect being that is in the mind should have been implanted in it by the infinite God and He should therefore exist. Moral reason demands the union of duty and happiness and requires us to postulate a moral Being who connects the natural and moral orders. In this way reason becomes the ally of religion and this rational religion is called natural theology as contrasted with revealed theology, which relies entirely on belief. Monism, which also claims to be based on reason rather than on revelation, allies itself with scepticism in rejecting the theistic proofs and dethroning the God of religion. The proofs are said to make an illegitimate use of categories which are applicable only to phenomenal reality, and we cannot go from the WHAT to the THAT which is beyond thought. The teleological proof, it is argued, is no proof at all, as there is no design or goodness in the world and it can be proved by appeal to experience that the world is irrational and is the worst of all possible worlds, as it is rooted in arbitrariness, injustice and cruelty. The idea of an external Designer, a remote God who has no intimate relation with the world, is based on false analogy. It is spiritually worthless and the very term 'Almighty' brings out the despotic might of the Deity and His delight in inflicting unmerited suffering.

The cosmological theory of a first cause, an uncaused cause and a prime mover is a nest of self-contradictions from

which there is no escape. Inference is a logical method and there is no passage from finite knowledge to the infinite. The proof admits of a plurality of causes and creators and is not therefore theistic. As regards the ontological argument it is not permissible to infer from the idea of a perfect being its existence, as the concept of reality is different from reality itself. It is absurd to prove the existence of God from the idea of God; existence can never be the predicate of a judgment and can only be the subject. The moral postulate is admittedly not a proof and is a mere faith not justified by moral experience. The demand made by moral reason for the union of duty and happiness is mere wishful thinking based neither on reason nor on experience. A consistent rationalism logically leads to agnosticism and scepticism. A Berkeley is followed by a Hume in Western thought. In the same way *Nyāya* theism is rejected by Buddhistic agnosticism. Natural theology is a misnomer as it is neither reason nor faith, and it is impossible to apprehend the existence of God or comprehend His nature by its method. Traditionalism can never thrive in an atmosphere of free thought. The truths of theology cannot therefore be demonstrated by natural reason. They are articles of faith drawn from dogmatics. Theology is therefore revealed and not natural, and there is a deep cleavage between philosophy and dogma, the former being founded on sense-perception and reason and the latter, on a belief in the sacred truths of God. The religious dogmatist holds that the word of scripture is God. The *Vēda* is the very breath of Brahman and is its own evidence. While in natural theology faith is justified by reason and philosophy proceeds from nature to divine nature, in revealed theology reason is subservient to faith and it proceeds from God to nature. An estrangement is thus effected between

reason and faith, and theology is withdrawn from the jurisdiction of philosophy and philosophy from the domain of faith. Faith and reason belong to different realms, and it is impossible to prove the existence of God by logical thinking. Mere reason is ill-founded and self-contradictory as is evidenced by the arguments advanced by the Buddha, Jina, Kaṇāda and Kapila. The history of philosophy reveals the barrenness of intellectual speculation, and its conclusions admit of no finality or conviction. The theologian maintains, therefore, that faith requires no proof as it is its own evidence. Free thought leads to atheism and is to be condemned as a heresy. The fight between philosophy and theology is then carried on on a higher level between intuitionism and revelationism.

Though the existence of God cannot be proved, He can be experienced by means of direct intuition. Intuition is said to be an immediate experience of God and to transcend the realms of sentient experience and reason. The logical intellect dissects reality and gives us only diagrams or abstractions and partial pictures. The categories of the understanding can explain only the phenomonal and not the absolute. But intuition transcends the level of instinct and intelligence and is a direct insight into God or *ātman* and is ineffable and incommunicable. *Ātman* is alogical and amoral and cannot be apprehended by discursive reason or attained by moral effort. The alogical and amoral is the fulfilment of logical and moral experience and is therefore not hostile to them. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* accepts the *Nyāya* method of testing truth by means of the disciplined logical intellect and emancipating it from the fallacies incidental to the investigation of truth, but repudiates *Nyāya* theology and its materialistic idea of *mukti*. It also welcomes the *Mīmāmsaka* view of *Vēdic dharma* and

insists on the authority of the moral consciousness; but it subordinates the imperative of duty to the philosophic need of immediately intuiting Brahman that is ever self-realized and not something to be accomplished. The *Vēdavādin* who performs his duties should develop into the *Vēdāntin* who seeks the Deity and intuits Him.

But theology does not favour this mystic philosophy as the mystic experience of Brahman is private, particular and arbitrary without any objective validity and lacks faith in the infallibility of revelation or *s'āstra*. Scripture is the word of God, not in the sense of a miraculous revelation or direct dictation of God, but in the sense that it is eternal and infallible. A literal faith in scriptural revelation is, according to the theologian, more important to religion than personal religion. Religion is essentially theo-centric and cannot be traced to personal experience. The proofs of God are meant either for the theist or for the atheist. The former is a believer who needs no proof and the latter is an unbeliever who rejects the proofs. Scripture is its own proof and every word of it is an eternal truth and should be considered as holy as a shrine of God. Philosophic explanation is admissible only if, like a handmaid, it is subservient to faith and justifies the truth of revelation deductively without resorting to the heretic method of historical and logical criticism. Faith is sanctified by tradition or *sat sampradāya* and is a heritage bequeathed to posterity in the form of divinely ordained truths. The main duty of the believer is submission to authority and loyalty to *sampradāya* or sacred tradition and the spiritual community. It is the essence of scholasticism that dogma as an article of faith should regulate life. Philosophy should learn to square with dogma and not conflict with it. Philosophy is read into

faith, and conduct should conform to the will of God as expressed in the sacred tradition which is the final truth.

The warfare between faith and reason thus reaches its climax when intuition tries to oust faith in revelation and when faith tries to oust intuition. Authoritarianism fights intuitionism on the ground that it refers to mere subjective and private experience which can never be the same for all. It strengthens itself by alliance with the forces of verbalism, dogmatism and fanaticism. Intuitionism is anti-theological and is a spiritual quest for immediate religious experience, and it allies itself with mysticism. Another form of intuitionism rejects religion as a mere appearance of reality betraying the self-contradiction between self and God. Religion and its God disappear in the non-dual experience of oneness. But there cannot be a more solid reality than religious experience. The philosopher thinks that he alone enquires into the whole of experience and that religion is only an appearance of the whole. Religion condemns philosophy as mere theory and philosophy rejects religion as arbitrary and intuitional. No man can be a free thinker in philosophy and, at the same time, a believer in religion. The religious thinker should be consistent and have a reasonable religion or religious system. The *esse* of religion is not *credo* or belief and the *esse* of philosophy is not *cogito* or 'I think.' A true philosopher accepts the truths of religious faith, experiments with them and experiences them. The differentia of philosophy is the venture of the *mumukṣu* to know reality, and that of religion is the realization of reality as Brahman. A true philosophy of religion is thus neither a free rational speculation on the nature and value of reality nor is it a theology which has no faith in the

trustworthiness of the *pramāṇas* of sense-perception and reasoning.

The problem of *Vēdānta* as the attempt to think out all things and discover their spiritual meaning and value is stated in a classical way in the *Taittirīyōpaniṣad* in the dialogue between Varuṇa and his son Bhṛgu. The problem is: "What is That from which these beings are born, by which they are sustained and into which they return? Bhṛgu, as the true son of a philosopher-mystic, seeks to understand the problem and solve it by a resolute spiritual effort and consecrated life. The true *Vēdāntin* seeks to know the right way of framing questions and gradually recognizes that *Vēdānta* is not the obstinate questioning of outward things or mere resolute thinking, but is a spiritual quest or induction. Bhṛgu attempts various definitions of Brahman as suggested by the teacher, like *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manōmaya* and *vijñānamaya*, which have their parallels in western thought as materialism, vitalism, mentalism and rationalism. But none of these definitions satisfies him as they do not exhaust the nature of the Absolute. The hunger for the Absolute can be satisfied only by the Absolute. It is the perfect alone that is self-complete and supremely valuable. Bhṛgu then realizes that Brahman is *ānandamaya*, the intuitional Highest, and that this mystic experience of Brahman is the crown and consummation of knowledge.

Vēdānta is thus an enquiry into the meaning of Brahman and is really a *dars'ana*. The term *dars'ana* adequately expresses the foundational truths of *Vēdānta* as the philosophic knowledge of reality strengthened by *vivēka* or discrimination and *vairāgya* or freedom from sense desires, as well as

the spiritual realization of that knowledge. It is an organic integration of *s'ruti* or scripture, *yukti* or logic, and *anubhava* or intuitive experience, or, to put it in other words, the claims of revelational faith, rational enquiry and intuitive verifiability. A *dars'ana* is a body of eternal and impersonal spiritual truths enshrined in *s'ruti* which can be logically tested and verified by personal experience. *S'ruti* is self-valid and the self-explanation of existence in its wholeness and of experience in its integrity. The *Vēdāntic dars'ana* affords insight into the nature of Brahman, and the ultimate proof of the existence of Brahman is the experience of Brahman. It is not *tarka dṛṣṭi* or the natural light of reason and dialectic thinking on all things, but is *tattva dṛṣṭi* or the soul-sight of Brahman by knowing which everything is known. The *Upaniṣadic ṛṣis* were specialists in spirituality and were philosopher-seers. Reason mediates between objective revelation and intuitive realization and corrects the dogmatic tendency of the former and the subjectivistic tendencies of the latter. The truths of *Brahmajñāna* are out there in their absoluteness; but they are inductively discovered by intuitive insight and deductively deduced from the *s'ruti*. To the *guru* such *jñāna* is self-revelatory and deductive; but to the disciple it is a spiritual induction by self-criticism. Spiritual truths are spiritually discerned and experienced and they are true for ever, and whatever is spiritually satisfactory is true. It is the aim of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion to reconcile the extremes of reason and faith by the sublime truth that Brahman is the ultimate explanation of the world of *cit* and *acit* or the sentient and the non-sentient, and the supreme end of spirituality and that outside Brahman there is no reality. The more the *Jīva* is spiritual the more Brahmanized it is. The *sātvata* religion of the *Pāñcarātra* is the *word*

of God promoting godliness and is therefore true. Pragmatically speaking, the divine experiences of the *Āḷvārs* have *Vēdāntic* validity and value. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion reconciles revelation, reason and intuition, and claims to be universal and accepts whatever is coherent with its cardinal truths. It summons humanity to participate in the riches of *Brahmānubhava* or the experience of Brahman, and its spiritual hospitality knows no geographical or racial barriers.

CHAPTER II

RĀMĀNUJA'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

THE central idea of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion is the integration and harmonization of all knowledge obtained through sense-perception, inference and revelation. The key-thought of revelation is enshrined in the *Upaniṣadic* text '*Brahmavid āpnōti param*' (He who knows Brahman attains the highest).[1] This text affirms the inter-related unity of the threefold system of *Vēdāntic* wisdom known as *tattva*, *hita* and *puruṣārtha*, as elaborated in the four chapters of the *Vēdānta Sūtras*. *Tattvajñāna* is the philosophic exposition of Brahman as the immanent ground of existence and the inner self of all things. *Hita* involves the determination of the moral and the spiritual means or *sādhanas* of realizing Brahman and *puruṣārtha* is the attainment of Brahman as the *summum bonum* of life by realizing which everything is realized. To ignore this interpretation is to take a false step in the philosophy of religion, leading to a blind alley. This is illustrated in the philosophy of Kant and S'aṅkara. The problem of philosophy as the criticism of knowledge is formulated in western thought by Kant in the classical form "What can I know, what ought I to do? and what may I hope for? The Kantian solution lies in showing the impossibility of metaphysics being explained as rational

[1] *Tait. Upan*, II. i.

psychology, cosmology and theology. The transcendental ideas of the self, nature and God are transcendental illusions which have no constitutive use and are therefore deceptive. But ethics as practical reason needs the postulation of the ideas of God, freedom and immortality. This method has led to the opposition between reality and appearance and the impossibility of bridging the gulf between thought and reality. For example, the metaphysical theory of *adhyāsa* or erroneous predication held by *Advaita* brings out the self-contradictions of experience and reduces nature, self and God to mere appearances. But, on the practical side, it restores what was demolished by dialectics and accepts the pragmatic value of *cit*, *acit* and *Īs'vara*. In this way, there is a fissure in philosophy due to the antagonism between the pure reason of *Advaita* and its practical, ethical and religious side. What reason declares to be erroneous and deceptive is accepted as having relative truth because the world of practical life would be impossible without it. But *Vis'is'ṭādvaita* avoids this blind alley by accepting the trustworthiness of thought, and it is therefore a philosophy of affirmation and valuation. Its answer to the three questions is that Brahman is knowable as the supreme *tattva*. *Hita* is doing one's duty as *Brahmārpaṇa* combined with Bhakti, and the *pūruṣārtha* is the Brahmanization of the self, whereby the self attains the eternal nature of Brahman. Philosophy is thus a criticism of knowledge and is a revolution in method, as it gathers up the divergent lines of thought and combines them in a new and synthetic way. All the currents of knowledge converge in Brahman, by knowing which everything is known. The first problem of philosophy is "What can I know ?" It is the problem of the theory of knowledge, its origin and nature, and this chapter brings out the solution offered by *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* epistemology.

The problem of epistemology is the problem of the relation between knowledge and reality. It is stated thus: "What is the connection between the course of consciousness in the individual self and the world of persons and things which constitute the objective world *par excellence* and the all-self?" This question does not presuppose a radical distinction between rational psychology, cosmology and theology or the knowledge of the self, nature and God, as the three are inter-related. The world of knowledge has a unity sustained by the intelligent self which endures in all the levels of experience including the perceptual, the rational and the revelational sides. The first question in epistemology is about the origin and possibility of knowledge. *Viśiṣṭādvaita* affirms the knowability of reality and says that we can know things as they are. In the perceptive judgment, which is the beginning and foundation of all knowledge as in the example "I see a rose," the self with its *jñāna* perceives the object 'rose' and does not passively receive the visual sensation. The knowledge presupposes a knowing self and an object of thought. It is ordinarily explained as an ascent from the sensation to the self. Sensations form the raw material of knowledge and they become percepts by means of the *a priori* form prescribed by the mind. The perceived objects are conceived and arranged by the synthetic mind or understanding. The mind or understanding brings together the perceived objects and forms judgments; without the unity of self-consciousness sensation cannot pass into perception and conception or judgment. Reason unifies the judgments, and is a higher principle than understanding and arrives at the idea of self, nature and God as the highest unity. In this way epistemology is said to start with sensation as the matter of knowledge and proceed through perception and conception to the self as the synthetic

unity of knowledge. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, however, lays stress on the work of thought as a revelatory function. Knowledge is not a synthetic construction, but is purely a spiritual process by which things are revealed. The objects in nature are given and are not made by thought. It is the function of thought only to reveal them and not to create them. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* theory of knowledge is thus different from western theories. According to it, *jñāna*, the attributive intelligence of the self, as contrasted with the *antaḥkaraṇa* of the *Advaita* philosophy, can reveal both itself and the object outside it. In the act of perception, it streams out from the self towards the object and illumines it. *Jñāna* or knowledge starts from the *ātman* and, with the *manas* and the *indriyas*, comes into contact with the object (*artha*), assumes its form and thus reveals it. The knowledge of the object thus arises when *jñāna* contacts the object through the inner and the outer senses.[1] The theory has the merit of recognizing the priority and the primal fact of consciousness or *jñāna* and the relative independence of the conscious self and the non-conscious object. The object is not a *vṛtti* or idea or psychosis objectified by *avidyā* or nescience, nor is the subject the counterfeit self of *ahaṅkāra* or egoism. Both are inter-dependent reals essential to knowledge. This view escapes the perils of materialism and mentalism, as it predicates the reality of the perceiving self and of the external world that is perceived.

The theory of perception adopted by *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is neither mediaeval nor unscientific as it is sometimes said to be, but contains a profound truth which satisfies the demands of science and the claims of philosophic thought. Many of

[1] *Yatīndramatadīpikā*, I. 15.

the current theories of the origin of knowledge fail to give a satisfactory account of *pratyakṣa* or sense-perception. Science is specialized knowledge of some aspect of reality, and its explanation is therefore fractional, fragmentary and abstract. In the judgment of sight perception, 'I see the rose,' the physicist may trace the visual sensation to the light vibrations starting from the object and stimulating the eye, which is like a photographic camera, and to the formation of the visual image on the retina. The physiologist then refers to the response of the neurone to the external stimulus and also to the passage of the impulse to the visual area where it is resisted by the synapses, causing the flash of consciousness. The psychologist takes up the story and explains sensation as the report of the sensory stimulation in consciousness which gives us acquaintance with the object. Each sensation has its specific function on account of which the eye can only see the thing and the ear, hear the sound. The feel of a thing is different from its look. But the sense object is not the bare atomic sensation. A philosopher like Kapila or Kant goes a step further and traces the knowledge of the object to the synthetic unity of apperception that is in one's self-consciousness. The exponent of each succeeding view thus begins where the other ends, with the result that there is no real explanation of the process by which the self knows the object 'rose.'

It is only by the synthetic co-ordination of the abstract truths of physics, physiology and psychology, genetic and rational, that the concrete experience as such can be explained. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* theory of knowledge avoids the perils of the analytic method by stating the simple fact that the self with its *jñāna* knows the object which

is relatively external to it. The self seeks to know the external object through the channels of the senses as a whole, just as white light is perceived as a whole in spite of its separate spectral colours. This synthetic view is thus the criticism and completion of the conclusions of the special sciences like physics, physiology and psychology. Knowledge is the self-revelation of the real object as a whole and is not a piecing together or juxtaposition of the *a priori* or the rational with the *a posteriori* or the empirical. It is neither an ascent from the particulars of sense to a pervading identity nor a descent from the universal to the concrete facts. The object is not the copy of the idea nor is the idea the archetype of the object, and neither is deduced from the other. To say that the mind or its *vṛtti* or form creates the object and takes its form is to take no account of the object at all. The object is not a not-self made of *avidyā* opposed to the self but a real thing in *terra firma*, and it includes other selves also as social objects. The world of physical objects is for consciousness and not in consciousness. Objects have an existence independent of consciousness. The subject can realize itself as the eternal self-conscious *ātman* different from the object. How does the subjective consciousness then perceive the object that is outside it and different from it? The answer of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* may be stated as follows: The ultimate explanation of the subject-object relation is afforded by the religious insight that the real subject of every judgment is Brahman that is in all things not as a *tertium quid* but as their inner self. When I say "I think," it really means "Brahman thinks in me as my self." Brahman as infinite intelligence is the prius and presupposition of finite thought and has more affinity with it than with external things.

THE NATURE OF DHARMABHŪTAJÑĀNA

The concept of *dharmabhūtajñāna* or attributive knowledge is the foundational truth of the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* theory of knowledge as it alone throws light on the nature of reality, and the idea is well expounded in the *Yatīndramatadīpikā* (Ch. VII). It alone furnishes the meaning of the three ultimate facts of cosmic consciousness, self-consciousness and Brahman-consciousness. Consciousness cannot be aware of itself, but presupposes a self of which it is the idea or attribute. *Jñāna* is not identical with reality or the self: the two are separate but are not separable. If being and knowing are identical, the theory of knowledge or epistemology is identical with the theory of being or ontology, and there is no need for the theorizing activity at all. If what is is in itself, then there is no 'ism' as a metaphysical explanation of what is. The other alternative that knowing is entirely unrelated to being is equally inadmissible as it would land us in scepticism. If there is a self-discrepancy between thought as 'what' and reality as 'that,' thought can never grasp reality or get merged in it. The *nēti* method, or the method of negation, that consists in abstracting pure consciousness from its quality of consciousness is a denial of consciousness itself. The true *nēti* method has nothing to do with doubting knowledge and denying it. It is a false step in monistic philosophy to start with doubt and end with denial. The monist answers the question of how the conscious subject within can perceive what is external to it by denying the reality of an external object and declaring the percept as a false appearance projected by the mind, which is itself unreal. This view is also allied to scepticism. It stultifies itself and is sterile. The act of denial at least exists as an act. If it is regarded as an illusion, the illusion exists as a

fact and if it is causally explained, it leads to the fallacy of infinite regress. It is difficult for the monist to explain how the illusion arises. If it is explained as the result or effect of a cause like *avidyā*, the origin of this *avidyā* crops up for explanation. Even the statement that nothing exists assumes the conceivability of something which it denies. Thought constitutes reality as its inner quality and is not super-added to, or super-posed on it. The fact that something exists affirms a quality of that something. What is has a quality apart from its existence. Since a quality cannot exist by itself and be its own predicate, it presupposes a substance of which it is a quality. A substance has a quality and is not a quality or aggregate of qualities. If monism affirms mere being or substance and denies its having qualities, or in other words, predication and determination, it is combated by phenomenalism (like that of Buddhism) which admits qualities and denies substance. Even monism is constrained to concede the truth of substance and qualities when it refers to the *ās'raya* or *adhiṣṭāna* as the locus of illusion. *Dharma* or quality presupposes *dharmin*, the substance, and *dharmin* presupposes *dharma*; the denial of the one is the denial of the other, and such denial is opposed to all *pramāṇas* or instruments of knowledge. When sutstance is *svaprakās'a* or self-illumined, it is called *ajaḍa* and is different from *jaḍa* like the world of space and time. *Ajaḍa* is consciousness with content divided into *pratyak* or conscious self existing by itself and its knowledge or *parāk* (existing for another) which is its essential quality or *dharmabhūtajñāna*. Substance as *ajaḍa* or the immaterial is thus conceived as a conscious self, finite or infinite. It is the subject of experience that has *jñāna* as its inseparable attribute. *Ātman* is and has consciousness. It is substantive intelligence and has

attributive intelligence as well, which manifests its nature. The two can be logically distinguished but cannot be divided.

Dharmabhūtajñāna is self-illumined (*svayam prakāś'a*) and it also illumines objects (*artha prakās'aka*). It is also called *mati*, *prajñā*, *s'ēmuṣī* and *samvit*. It can reveal itself and the objects, but it is only revelatory and is not self-realized like the *ātman*. It is midway between *cētana* and *jaḍa*, as it manifests itself and objects like *cetana* and is for another like *acētana*. It is like physical light which can only "show but cannot know;"[1] and it exists in the self and is sustained by its intelligence. The relation between the *ātman* and its *jñāna* is like that between light and its luminosity. The self is a knowing subject and is not mere intelligence. Nor is it true to say that intelligence is an adventitious quality or creation of *ajñāna* or ignorance. *Jñāna* is self-originated and *sui generis* and self-valid. We can think away all things, but we cannot think away thought or *jñāna*. In affirming the 'I' in the judgment 'I am conscious,' consciousness is predicated of the self that is affirmed, but it does not imply the identity of being and knowing. The self that exists and is conscious is not mere consciousness. *Jñāna* explains itself and things and it is an act of inner necessity. It is the idea that has concourse with the thing and makes the world of nature intelligible and imparts meaning and value to *buddhi* and other mental states which are the modifications of *jñāna* and not its creations. Reason and understanding, perception and sensation are illumined and explained by *jñāna*, but *jñāna* is self-explanatory. *Jñāna* functions in the empirical states

[1] Hiriyanna's article on Rāmānuja's Theory of Knowledge in the *Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress*, 1925.

through the medium of *manas* or the auxiliary cause and is often identified with it as a matter of convention (*upacāra*). All states of consciousness ranging from the lowest instinct to the highest state of *bhakti*, including *vivēka* (discrimination), *pratyakṣa* (perception) *anumāna* (inference), and *s'abda* (scriptural faith) are only modifications or *avasthas* of *jñāna*. The knowledge of things in the external world is explained by the object-revealing character of *jñāna*. In the empirical or *saṃsāra* state of the *jīva*, *jñāna* radiates from the centre and illumines the objects through the medium of the senses. The distinction drawn by some western objective idealists between idea in the psychological sense of a perishing psychical presentation and idea in the logical sense of reference to reality is artificial, since *jñāna* is as real as the object known and since there is no barrier between the subjective and the objective. The object is not a mental construction or creation or shadow of the idea, nor is the idea a faint copy or duplicate of the object as *jñāna* is both *svayaṃ prakās'a* or capable of illumining itself and *artha prakās'aka* or capable of illumining objects. If modern psychology has to retrace its steps and find its solution in metaphysics, it will receive a flood of light from the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* truth of the self and its consciousness. The view that the self-consciousness of the self is the source of all mental states and that it is its nature to reveal external objects has the merit of simplicity which is a true test of truth and affords a basis for the reconciliation of the claims of realism and idealism. Sensation has a metaphysical foundation in the self and the self itself has its meaning and value in its inner Self. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* prefers the method of tracing psychology to metaphysics and religion to the reverse process of deriving religion and metaphysics from psychology.

The self is *cidrūpa* or of the nature of consciousness and has *caitanya* or consciousness for its essential quality. While the finite self is *aṇu* or monadic and infinitesimal in nature, its consciousness is *vibhu* or all-pervasive and infinite. The self abides in its own monadic being, but has windows and its consciousness has no limitations as it can mirror the whole universe as its object. During the phenomenal state of *saṃsāra*, *jñāna* is causally determined by the moral law of *avidyā-karma* and is limited in the embodied state. Consciousness which is capable of becoming infinite is spatialized, cribbed and confined and it is this finitized existence of *jñāna* that accounts for the difference in the states of the *jīva* from the butterfly to Brahmā. In the noumenal state of *mukti*, *jñāna* is infinite consciousness and is all-pervasive. It is then freed from the contractions due to *karma*. It is co-eval with cosmic consciousness and God-consciousness. While the self is immutable and eternal and abides in its own being, its consciousness changes. But it endures through time and persists even in dreamless sleep, and in swoon or senselessness, as is evidenced by the experience 'I slept well.' In sleep the revelatory nature of *jñāna* is overpowered by *tamas*, but is not absent. Its non-experience during sleep is no argument to prove its non-existence and the fact of memory refutes the so-called antecedent non-existence of *jñāna*. The self persists in its subjective modification as a pervading identity and while it illumines other objects it is not illumined by them. Besides, the three states of consciousness are continuous and are not self-contradictory. It is meaningless to explain youth as the contradiction of childhood and as sublated by manhood. The three are different phases of a single life having the same biological end and not the three discrepant unreals of monistic logic. Even monism admits the co-existence of the self as *sākṣin* and the

antaḥkaraṇa persists as a possibility in the so-called non-dual experience of sleep. *Jñāna* is there, but its light is hidden and is not known and the *sākṣin* in sleep is a witness of something. A witness that witnesses nothing is *s'ūnya* and serves no purpose. Consciousness is continuous, distinct and clear in the waking state, dim and confused in the sub-conscious and dream states, and divine in *mukti*. It is implied in sleep and stupor, and even in the abnormal states of dispersal and dissociation of personality. The differences are to be accounted for psychologically as the changing states of the same self and its consciousness because of its being affected by *avidyā-karma*. The unmanifest state of *jñāna* is not *ajñāna* or illusion but *jñāna* as essence or real possibility. When the confusions of *avidyā* and the contractions of *karma* are removed, *jñāna* wakes to itself, expands and shines again in its infinite and eternal splendour and the monadic self radiates its light everywhere besides mirroring forth the universe from its own point of view. Then perceptual and inferential knowledge expands into full integral experience. The *jīva* as the bare monad of matter can become the pure monad freed from it and the *yōgin* can evolve into the *Īs'vara* state of having cosmic consciousness. The *jñāna* of *Īs'vara*, unlike that of the bound *jīva*, is ever all-pervasive (*nitya* and *vibhu*). The idea of the finite self with infinite consciousness as its essential and eternal nature is not inconceivable. Even absolutism is constrained psychologically to posit the existence of an infinity of finite selves or *nānā jīva*. The *Vis'iṣtadvaita* theory of *jñāna* has the merit of recognizing the reality of the finite and the infinite and reconciling the claims of pluralism and monism. The infinite pervades the finite and removes its exclusive feeling of individualism. By knowing the one we know the other and the intelligence of the *jīva*, finite and infinite has its home in the

absolute intelligence of Brahman. Thus the theory of intelligence being both finite and infinite and changing and changeless is not really self-contradictory or paradoxical, for it alone bridges the gulf between the moveless infinite and the changing consciousness. If the infinite is infinite and the finite is finite, knowledge would become impossible. But the theory of *dharmabhūtajñāna* sacrifices neither the finite nor the infinite as it mediates between the two and traces spiritual consciousness to its headquarters in Brahman.

Dharmabhūtajñāna not only illuminates itself and the objects of nature but is also substance-attribute (*dravya-guṇa*). It has already been analogically explained by comparison with light. Light or *prabhā*, as in sun light or lamp light, illumines objects and is a quality inhering in a substance. At the same time, as the substratum of colour and the shades of colouration, it is a substance. Likewise the term *jñāna* expresses an essential and eternal attribute that inheres in the self; but as it contracts and expands like a substance owing to the determining influence of *karma*, it is the substratum of change and may be defined as a substance as well. Eternal consciousness changes when it is caught up in the world of *karma*, but comes to itself in the state of *mukti* when it is freed from sense contact. *Jñāna* is thus both changing and changeless and is both substance and quality. It is thus the peculiar spiritual quality of the *ātman* and is contrasted with the qualities of objects or their secondary sensations. *Dharmabhūtajñāna* is said to be, like the infinite mode of Spinoza, a link between the changeless state of reality and the changing phenomenal states. *Jñāna* is one though it realizes itself in various mental modifications starting with the animal instincts and ending with the divine impulse of *bhakti*. *Jñāna* functions

as conation and feeling and therefore every state of consciousness is cognitive, conative and affective. It contains within itself the principle of self-differentiation and self-activity. *Jñāna* is not thought which is abstract and moveless or a self-identical blank, but is a mode of thinking with infinite variations. It is not the sum of mental processes, nor an identity that pervades the differences, but is the self-same consciousness that exhibits itself, owing to the influence of *avidyā-karma* as particular perishing presentations. Thus it is not, strictly speaking, like Spinoza's infinite modes, a device to bridge the gap between the infinite that is indeterminate and the finite modes.[1] It is equally futile to reduce *jñāna* to the level of *jaḍatva* or inertness and *ajñāna* on the ground that whatever knowledge belongs to *anātman* or non-self is objectified thought or *ajñāna*. This view of *jaḍatva* cuts at the root of the theory of knowledge and is like saying that one's own mother is a barren woman. *Jñāna* is the mother of metaphysics and if it becomes *ajñāna* it is sterile. *Cit* and *caitanya* are, like light and its uminosity, inseparable though distinguishable. If knowledge veils the self, the desire for *mukti* and for knowing the self would only be a make-believe and scepticism would be the only conclusion.

The Theory of Judgment

Every judgment is the affirmation of reality and not the apprehension of identity devoid of content or differentiation. For example, when we say "this tree is green," the predicate, *viz.*, the idea of greenness, is attributed to the subject 'tree' which is given in sense-perception. In other words, the new idea qualifies and amplifies the meaning of the subject. If, on

the other hand, the subject and the predicate are identical, there is no knowledge at all. Thought qualifies reality and presupposes the distinction between the subject and the object of the judgment. Judgment as an act of predication is the fundamental principle of philosophic logic and the two elements of subject and predicate are integrally united and not isolated bits or opposites. If thought is identical with reality, the judging process is tautological and is needless. But if thought is opposed to reality and cannot reach it, it is shipwrecked in the very entrance to the harbour of knowledge and is therefore useless. The only way of solving the problem lies in the affirmation that reality is knowable by thought on account of the inseparable relation and of the logical faith in the reality of predication as a subject-object relation. Reality is therefore *savis'ēṣa* or determinate and not *nirvis'ēṣa* or indeterminate. A *nirvis'ēṣa vastu* is a self-contradiction. Consciousness abstracted from the knowing self or the subject and the object is inconceivable and non-existent. If consciousness as such is self-proved, it has at least the quality of being self-proved. If it is permissible to argue that pure consciousness remains identical with itself when *jñāna* dispels *ajāña* and destroys itself, it is equally justifiable to say that self-consciousness cannot be sublated and the self remains as an eternal subject and cannot have antecedent or consequent non-existence. Judgment is the unity which explains the different elements. It does not explain them away. The two are correlated and distinguishable elements of knowledge. Determination is not negation, but negation is determination and acquires positive meaning in a judgment by defining its nature, and it presupposes self-determination. Substance as an entity would be an empty abstraction if it is devoid of content. Substance is not the mere aggregate of attributes, but is their organic unity

and underlying reality. The distinction between indeterminate and determinate perception (*nirvikalpaka* and *savikalpaka*) is not a difference in kind between the undifferentiated, which is devoid of difference, and the differentiated. Both are complex presentations. Knowledge, even primitive sensation, is significant and is in the form of judgment. It is a development of the objective. The indefinite becomes the definite and clear. The substantive-quality relation is implicit in the former and explict in the latter. If the first is bare identity, it is non-relational and no amount of subsequent knowledge can introduce difference into it. But, as a matter of fact, the first called *prathama piṇḍa grahaṇa* is the absence not of difference and discrimination altogether but of some specific difference as "this is such" and is articulate, and the second called *dvitīya piṇḍa grahaṇa* is the extension to what is already affirmed of the generic character of a class. The first judgment "this is a cow" is indefinite but not indeterminate; the second "this is also a cow" is revival based on similarity of structure, and both are *savis'ēsa* and not *nirvis'ēṣa*. Every judgment is in the form "this is such" in which the predicate qualifies the subject.[1] There is no boundary line between what is given and its extension. What is immediate knowledge is, by its own necessity, mediated. We give a reason for what is immediately felt. When we say that there is a fire, we try to give a reason for the assertion. In every judgment extent and intent go together. The *Naiyāyika* says that *sāmānya* or generality is out there as a distinct category; but it is not true, as such a general idea is a mere abstraction. The *jāti* or genus is realized in the *vyakti* or individual owing to the intimate structural

[1] *Vēdārtha Saṅgraha* (edited by S. Vasudevachariar), p. 94, and S. B. E., Vol. XLVIII, p. 41.

similarity of pattern or *saṃsthāna*. Therefore *sāmānya* or genus is practically the same as *samsthāna* and is structured. Thus there is no contradiction between *savikalpaka* and *nirvikalpaka jñāna*. Two different things are contradictory only when they stand in the same relation to the same subject. But different qualities like whiteness and redness may co-exist in the same object cow. To say that there is being as such without any quality is the result of progressive abstraction. It is wrong to say that the first perception is a knowledge of pure being or *nirvis'ēṣa cinmātra*. A pure sensation as such is psychologically impossible.

Even in a perceptive judgment like "this is a jar," the factors of knowledge can be distinguished and they are all equally real though their values may differ. The perceived object in its presentness is a given spot in the world of space-time which is in sensuous contact with the percipient subject or sensitive self. It comes into contact with a particular spot which is only a this-now. The judging activity belongs to *jñāna* which illumines the mental world and the world of nature and in this case it directly reveals the external object which is the illuminated spot or focus of attention. The sensitive self is the spiritual *ātman* different from the body, the senses, *manas* and *jñāna*. The *ātman* is self revelatory as well as self-realized and is the subject of every kind of knowledge; but the ultimate subject of knowledge is the inner Self of all thinking beings and objects of thought that is their prius and presupposition. Thus the logical subject is *jñāna*, the philosophical subject is the *ātman* or *dharmin* behind the *dharma*, and the subject of the religious consciousness is the *Paramātman* that is the whole reality that enters into the *ātman* as its Self and then enters into the world of nature as

its source and centre. Therefore every term, thought and thing ultimately connotes Brahman on account of its all-pervasive character. This is only from the connotative point of view, as Brahman, *cit* or *kṣētrajña*, and *acit* or *kṣētra* are ultimate reals and are therefore different denotatively.

The grammatical subject of a sentence is distinguished from the logical subject of the proposition. The grammatical subject also refers to reality qualified by difference in the light of the grammatical principle of the co-ordination of words in a sentence or *sāmānaadhikaraṇya*. It conveys the idea of one thing being qualified by several attributes.[1] The words denote the same thing but connote its different qualities. It is the application to one thing of several words, for the application of each of which there is a different purpose. In the sentence "this is a tree," the terms 'this' and 'tree' standing for a *vyakti* or individual and a *jāti* or class respectively have different functions (*bhinna-pravṛtti-nimitta*); but they refer to the same thing. In the sentence "this is green," the *guṇa* 'greenness' in the *guṇi* 'this' refers to the same subject of discourse. Contradictories cannot co-exist at the same time and in the same context. But distincts may co-exist side by side as different qualities of the same object. The judgment "this person is that Devadatta" connotes the same entity existing in two different contexts and not absolute identity or non-difference. A sentence construed as a connected idea referring to reality is called a judgment and the above sentence explicitly refers to personal identity and means that Devadattatva in a particular former context belongs to him in the present context. The *Advaitic* interpretation of the theory of

[1] bhinna pravṛtti nimittānām s'abdānām ēkasmin arthē vṛttissāmānādhikaraṇyamiti hi tadvidaḥ.—*Vēdārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 80; sāmānādhikaraṇyam hi dvayōḥ padayōḥ prakāradvyaya-mukhēna ēkārtha-niṣṭhatvam. *Ibid.* p, 189.

sāmanādhikaraṇya in terms of absolute identity is untenable as the implied affirmation of such identity cuts at the very root of grammatical construction. To speak of bare identity as the implied sense or *lakṣya* as opposed to the apparent sense or *mukhya-vṛtti* really implies nothing and applies to nothing. Likewise the interpretation of the principle in terms of difference between subject and predicate as mere otherness has no meaning. Identity in difference is also impossible as the two are self-contradictory. The principle of co-ordination is ultimately the relation between *prakāra* and *prakārin*. In the sentence "the cow is white," whiteness depends for its meaning on the subject with which it is inseparably related as *apṛthaksiddhavis'ēṣaṇa* and the quality is therefore termed the *prakāra* or mode of the substance or *prakārin*. Likewise the sentence "He is Devadatta, a god" or "Yajñadatta a man" implies that the body is a mode or *prakāra* of the self which animates it. Therefore the term connoting the body connotes also the self, and ultimately, all terms referring to things and thinking beings are used in co-ordination with their inner self or Brahman, and therefore extend their meaning up to the self, which is their *prakārin*. Every kind of knowledge, perceptive, inferential or scriptural, refers to the ultimate knower or subject. *Ātman* and *ātman* alone is the inner meaning of all experience.

The Theory of Relations

Philosophical logic is thus based on the truths of determinate knowledge or *savis'ēṣa jñāna* and the principle of *sāmānādhikaraṇya*, and it throws light on the problem of external and internal relations. In the theory of external relations, the relations are said to make no difference to the terms related. The relata are external to the relation and one

substance does not pass into and become another. What exists alone is cognized. Knowledge is the awareness of external objects by the knowing subject, and such experience makes no difference to the existing objects. The external objects are given not as things but as objects to a subject and they form the *kṣētra*. They do not depend on the self or *kṣētrajña* for their existence. *Cit*, the percipient self, and *acit*, the perceived object, are externally connected, mutually exclusive and eternally real. Knowledge presupposes not only the independence of the subject and the object but also the existence of a plurality of knowing subjects and knowable objects. The self is not always the subject of knowledge, as, in social relations, each self is both subject and object. Inter-subjective intercourse and social love would be impossible if their is no subject-object relation among different persons and even the non-dualistic theory of *nānā-jīva* would be demolished if the existence of a spiritual society of interacting individuals is denied. The view that the relata are external to the relation is, however, self-contradictory and makes knowledge impossible. If the object is out there, outside the mind, it cannot be known, and if the subject is inside, it is shut up in itself. Thus there is no way of escape from scepticism on the one hand and subjectivism on the other. To avoid these fatal pitfalls, the theory of external relations and epistemological realism is to be restated in terms of the logic of *apṛthaksiddhavis'ēṣaṇa* (or inseparable attribute) and the theory of ontological non-dualism. For example, the relation between the hand and the pen is external, while that between the hand and the fingers is internal and organic. Externality implies the reality of the eternal differences of the facts of *cit* and *acit* ; but in relation to the whole which is their inner meaning, they become

inseparable and correlative factors and lose their independence and exclusiveness. Thus the plurality of *cit* and *acit* is accepted, but the pluralistic view is rejected. The cosmos is not subject or object, but is subject-object and it is appropriately defined as universe and not multiverse. As parts *cit* and *acit* are mutually exclusive and unrelated ; but, as parts of the all-pervasive consciousness of the inner Self which sustains them, they are internally and organically related. Qualities and relations depend on the whole of reality as their background. Internal relations are grounded in the nature of the terms related not as separate terms as such, but as terms connoting the ultimate ground of existence and experience as *vis'iṣṭa* and *vis'ēṣya.* The *vis'ēṣaṇa* is an attribute of the *vis'ēṣya* or adjective of the whole and is vitally related to it as its mode or *prakāra,* like the fragrance of the flower, the vowel related to the consonant and the body and its self. The *vis'iṣṭa* is thus not a mechanical whole of indifferent parts, nor the totality of attributes. The judgment "the lotus is fragrant" is not a unity of the substance and its quality or the subject-object relation as explained by the *bhēdābhēda* theory of identity in difference which regards identity and difference as two moments of reality. In its philosophic aspect, this view expounds reality as the absolute consisting of God and the finite centres. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita,* however, holds that the absolute is not God and the finite beings, but is God in the finite beings as their sustaining ground. While the *vis'ēṣya* or *prakārin* is one, the *vis'ēṣaṇas* or *prakāras* are many. Brahman and the world should be really Brahman in the world and are not two but one. The mathematical view of addition is opposed to the metaphysical view of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita.* The latter is likewise different from the adjectival theory of the absolute which explains the finite

self as the essential quality of the infinite and its connection of content and renders the term *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as qualified or modified monism. The finite self is an inseparable attribute of the infinite as its *apṛthaksiddhavis'ēṣaṇa* or *prakāra* but is, at the same time, a separate self persevering in its own being. The *vis'ēṣaṇa* is both substance and quality or *dravya guṇa* like light and its radiation. As quality or mode, it derives its substantiality from the self-effulgent *ātman*, but as substance it has its own monadic being. A quality is a quality of a substance; but when it is also a substance it admits of relation. The connection between *ātman* and *Paramātman* is thus not merely the logical view of substance and attribute but the spiritual view of two selves and these two are eternally existent. They are not externally related as *Paramātman* is defined as the inner self and meaning of the *jīva*, or its *antaryāmin*. This view has the merit of avoiding the defects of the monadic exclusiveness of Leibnitz and the modal inclusiveness of Spinoza. Real exclusiveness and ideal inclusiveness are incompatible, and the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* insight into Brahman as the *antaryāmin* throws a flood of light even on logical problems and provides an all-comprehensive view of reality. The self and the objects in nature are independent entities existentially and are externally related; but, as they have their meaning and value in the absolute as the all-self, they are related to it internally as its modes or *prakāras*. The absolute is self-related and has its own inner identity; but at the same time it is related to *cit* and *acit* which are its *prakāras* or modes. This interpretation avoids the fallacies of scepticism and of infinite regress.

The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* theory of knowledge may be summed up as a theory of the knowability of reality in all its levels.

and aspects and the acceptance of what is valuable in other systems in so far as they do not contradict its main truths. It cannot be defined as realistic or idealistic in the western sense of the term, as *manas* in *Vēdāntic* psychology along with *buddhi* and *ahaṅkāra* is a part of *prakṛti* or matter, and the body or *kṣētra* is distinguished from the *ātman* with its *jñāna*, which is called *kṣētrajña*. When Rāmānuja says that all knowledge is of the real (*sarvam vijñāna jātam yathārtham*)[1], he does not accept the realistic contention that knowledge comes from the external object through the sense organs and the mind passively receives the sense impressions like a blank sheet of paper. The self with its *jñāna* and its psycho-physical changes is as real as the external object or *prakṛti* with its twenty-three *tattvas*. Knowledge is revelatory and not representative. Since what exists alone is cognized, Rāmānuja's view is called *sat khyāti* or *yathārtha khyāti*.[2] Realism is justified in its conclusion that the existence of a thing is independent of our experience of it and that there is an external relation between an object and its awareness by the self. The thought of an object is not the object but is about it. A thing is known as it exists and it is wrong to say that it exists because it is known. Nature exists for consciousness and not in consciousness as its idea. But if realism as a philosophy insists on the primacy and priority of matter over the self as in western thought and rules out the work and worth of *jñāna*, it leans towards pan-objectivism and lapses into materialism. Idealism is justified if it accepts *dharmabhūtajñāna* as the presupposition of experience; but it is to be refuted if it ignores the reality of the external object given in

[1] *S'rī Bhāṣya*, I. i. 1, p. 87 (Ananda Press Edition).

[2] The other views known as *akhyāti*, *ātmakhyāti* and *anirvacanīyakhyāti* are not accepted by him.

sense-perception and explains it as a mental state or construction based on relations, internal or relevant. If *esse* is *percipi* or *cogitare*, then the object is the idea and the idea is the object, and idealism become subjectivism. If the internal relation alone is accepted, then space, time and causality are *a priori* forms belonging to the very structure of thought super-imposed on the manifold of sense. The world, according to this view, seems to be real and is not real. Then there would be no difference between waking and dream consciousness and what we know is what we seem to know and it is only an as if. Then thought cannot grasp reality and the theory of knowledge is the theory of no knowledge. S'aṅkara is well aware of the defects of extreme idealism and its Buddhistic leanings and affiliations and combats it by admitting the realistic view that the external object is not an idea or a projection of thought but has objective reality and that the waking state is different in kind from the dream state. No *Vēdāntin* accepts the atomic idealism and nihilism of Buddhistic epistemology. *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* absolutism checks the extremes of realism and idealism and points out the defects of the pure object philosophy and the pure subject philosophy by insisting on the reality of *kṣētrajña* or the knowing subject and the *kṣētra* or the knowable object, the correlativity of the subject-object relation and the immanence of the super-subject or *ātman* in *cit* and *acit*. *Ātman* enters into *cit* as its Self and enters into the object and then becomes the Self of the self. In the five factors of knowledge analysed already if the object alone is taken as the real, then there arises the realistic view ending in materialism ; if *manas* and *buddhi* constitute reality, there is mentalism with rationalism ; if the self alone exists, it is monadism or personalism ; and if Brahman alone exists, it is acosmism. But *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*

accepts all these existents, assigns a place and value to each of them and with its synthetic insight explains all selves and objects of knowledge as the living embodiments of the inner Self. It thus affirms the duality of the subject-object relation within the unity of experience between the experient and the thing experienced, but denies their dualism. It relies on the eternity of *cit* and *acit* as *bhōktā* or the experient and *bhōgya* or the experienced, but abolishes their externality.

The Vis'iṣṭādvaitic Theory of Truth

Vis'iṣṭādvaita as a synoptic philosophy accepts the integrity of experience in all its levels as given in *pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference), and *s'āstra* (scripture), on the ground that *jñāna* is self-valid and true, that the *sat* or the real alone is cognized and that there is no knowledge of *asat* or the unreal. If Brahman alone is real or *satya* and the world of experience is futile, false and non-existent (*tuccha* and *mithyā*) on account of the self-contradictions of dualistic knowledge, no knowledge is possible or desirable. Meticulous monistic logic cannot admit the co-existence of Brahman and *māyā* or different degrees of reality. *Māyā* is non-existence and cannot therefore co-exist with Brahman. If *māyā* refers to the world of illusion, then it contradicts the theory of degrees of reality and the truth of two standpoints as the *vyāvahārika* (or of the world of practical life) and the *pāramārthika* which is absolutely real. If truth is self-existent and the false non-existent there is no need for a theory of truth or a test of truth based on *abādha* or non-contradiction. Absolutism does recognize the distinction between reality and existence but this distinction is not an opposition. To Rāmānuja, Brahman is the *sat* or supreme reality that is the

pervading essence of the universe and its indwelling self and is therefore *satya* or true. The universe is not Brahman enveloped by *māyā* and *avidyā*, but is *Brahmamaya* or pervaded by Brahman. It is illumined by its radiant light. It exists in Brahman and not as Brahman, and does not exhaust its content. Reality exists as Brahman in *cit* and *acit*. *Acit* is matter which is ever-changing and perishing and may be called *asatya*. *Cit* is the eternal self with a uniform nature or intelligence which is realized as distinct from the perishing *prakṛti* or matter, and may be called *satya* or the true and the inner self of the existent *prakṛti*; Brahman may be called *satyasya satyam*, the real of all reals or the true of the true, or Vāsudēva. Reality and value co-exist and while matter has an extrinsic and ephemeral value and is *asatya*, the self has intrinsic value and is *satya*. Brahman is the true of the true and gives value to both. This view repudiates realism, idealism and monism as one-sided and abstract and recognizes the reality and value of nature, the individual self and Brahman.

Truth is the knowledge of a thing as it is and as it works or satisfies the practical interests of life[1]. This definition is clear and distinct and is free from the defects of *sams'aya* and *viparyaya* which arise from want of logical and moral discipline. The first is doubt as in the example " Is this a post or a person ? " and the second is mistaking one thing for another as in the rope-snake illusion. According to Rāmānuja, every kind of knowledge is true if it is consistent with experience in its exactitude, and he accepts the trustworthiness of the three *pramāṇas viz.*, (1) *pratyakṣa* including *abhāva*, (2) *anumāna* including *upamāna* and *arthāpatti* and (3) *s'abda*.

[1] yathāvasthitavyavahārānuguṇam jñānam pramā (*Y. D.*, I. 9).

In *pratyakṣa*, the *indriya* in its normal state has a direct knowledge of the thing as it is. *Anumāna* arises from the knowledge of *vyāpti* or the invariable concomitance between cause and effect. The inference need not consist of the five members in all cases. Reasoning is both deductive and inductive and it should be free from prejudice and lead to truth. It should avoid fallacies like contradiction (*viruddha*) circular reasoning (*anyōnyās'raya*) and infinite regress (*anavasthā*). *S'ruti*, as verbal testimony, is eternal, impersonal and true and all its parts are inter-connected and have a unity of import. All the three *pramāṇās* are coherent and they are not contradictory. *Pratyakṣa* is the foundation of knowledge and reasoning is based on it and does not supersede it. *S'ruti* is the consummation of all knowledge, but it cannot be at variance with *pratyakṣa*.[1] Truth is an immanent criterion and includes the more of itself and the three *pramāṇas* in their integral unity and perfection enable the truth-seeker to know the whole of reality.

THE THEORY OF ERROR

Since truth is revelatory or *svataḥprāmāṇya*[2] and every cognition is real, strictly speaking, there is no need for a theory of truth, and a theory of error is meaningless. Truth is the natural and normal feature of knowledge in the state of spiritual freedom, where there is no distinction between *pramā* and *bhrama* or truth and error. While the *jñāna* of the all-self is eternally pure and perfect and free from the confusion of *avidyā*, the intelligence of the finite self is subject to the self-contradictions and contractions of *avidyā-karma* which deprive

[1] s'āstrasya pratyakṣēṇa virōdhē sati durbalatvāt.

[2] *Yatīndramata Dīpikā*, I. 17.

it of its pure and all-pervasive character and this privation is called error. *Jñāna* is normally true cognition and even a false cognition like the bent stick is perspective and is real. Its extent and variety are determined by the logical and moral development of the self. If error is traced to the fissure between knowing and being and the self-contradictions of relational experience and if *avidyā* is the obscuring principle of reality, we can never go from degrees of truth to the absolute, and the absolute would itself be infected by illusion. The *Advaitic* theory of non-contradiction is no theory at all, as it says that error is *abhāva* or non-existent and reality is beyond *pramā* and *bhrama*. The merit of Rāmānuja's theory of error consists in saving the absolute from its self-deceptive *māyā* or *avidyā* and its illogical appearances and in attributing error to the finite self which has inexplicably allowed itself to be obscured by *avidyā*. Every empirical experience is incomplete or partial knowledge and even *pramā* is only partial truth. The distinction between *pramā* and *bhrama* is only one of degree and vanishes when *jñāna* is freed from the moral determinations of *karma*. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* utilizes every theory of error which fits in with its central idea and accepts the tests of pragmatism and realism so far as they go in harmonizing experience. The experience of an object as having gray colour owing to colour blindness is a psychic fact and is real. The shade of coloration is an aspect of the whole spatial order. The criterion of truth comprises the three theories of coherence, correspondence and workability in so far as they conform to the method of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. There is coherence if the given judgment is consistent with all other judgements and with the whole of knowledge. There is correspondence if there is exact conformity between the object as it is and its perception by the senses. Knowledge is true if it satisfies the ends

of life by its workability. In this way it may be shown that correspondence follows from coherence and verification results from the inner value of truth. Thus pragmatism, realism and idealism are all inter-related in *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* epistemology.

Falsity is abnormal and pathological as in mental disorders, and each case has to be judged on its own merits. Though error is too chaotic for classification, it may be grouped into certain types, like hallucinations, illusions and dreams which may be explained psychologically and by the criteria furnished by pragmatism and realism. In hallucination, an object is known to be physically present though there is so such object. An illusion is an erroneous perception in which one thing is mistaken for another. The dreamer seems to experience things which do not exist in the objective world. These abnormal phenomena are explained by the psychologist in terms of peripheral and interpretative factors and psycho-physical disorders; and all these are psychic occurrences and manifestations of *jñāna* that subsist and are facts of experience which cannot be dismissed as non-existent. The cause is real and therefore the effect also is real. The illusion of the double moon, of the white conch seen as yellow and of the firebrand seen as a continuous circle of light when whirled round are respectively traceable to the distorting medium, neural disorder, and the law of rapid rotation. In the first case, the illusion arises from some defect of the eye or the pressure of the finger on it. In the second case, the yellowness of the diseased eyeball is actually transmitted to the conch. One colour of the spectrum is abstracted from the whole, and the experience is purely subjective. In the third example, successiveness is omitted and simultaneity alone is felt.[1]

[1] *S.B.E.*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 123.

But if these mental states do not serve an end and satisfy the needs of practical life (*vyavahāra anuguṇa*), they are false. In the mirage experience, for example, the water element that is seen is alone apprehended owing to some defect in the eye, and the experience is not verified. Truth is selective and serviceable and, as it promotes the ends of life, it has a pragmatic value. Logic is related to psychology and it explains thought as a thinking process, and truth as a practical value. Truth is thus what works, but whatever works is not true. Truth is prior to its workability and it is not only *vyavahāra anuguṇa* but also *yathārtha* and has both conative and cognitive value. A judgment is true if the idea corresponds to the external object. It is objective in the sense that truth is true for all and is not personal and private. In accounting for illusions like the cognition of silver in the shell, and the snake in the rope, Rāmānuja accepts the fundamental unity of nature or *prakṛti* as composed of the five elements and the thinghood of things singled out in the act of sense-perception and defines truth as the apprehension of the dominant and relevant parts of the perceived object, and error as the non-observation of this essential part. The *Vēdāntic* theory of *pañcīkaraṇa* or quintuplication[1] states that every object in nature is composed of all the five *bhūtas* or elements in varying proportions and insists on the structural affinity and solidarity of the visible and tangible universe though its thinghood is largely shaped by one predominant element among the ingredients. In the normal perception of the external object, *jñāna* reveals only this main part; but in error, owing to certain psycho-physical conditions, the self perceives only the non-essential and insignificant portion of the thing. In the shell-silver illusion the silver element which resembles the shell is singled out from

[1] *S'rī Bhāṣya*, I. i. 1, p. 83 (Ananda Press Edition) and II. 17.

the complex of experience, and disillusionment arises when the silver content is known practically to have no economic value. Everything participates in the nature of everything else and all things or *bhautikas* are composed of all the elements or *bhūtas*. The thinghood of a thing as a part of the whole spatial order is so complex that the particular sciences can have only a practical and a partial knowledge of those aspects of the thing that are relevant to it and it is only the *jñanī* whose *jñāna* is perfected that can know all things as a whole. His mind transcends the one-to-one relation and acquires knowledge of the whole truth. But fragmentary knowledge is not a fiction or illusion projected by *avidyā* and sublatable by *jñāna*. The reality of nature and its inter-related elements is due to the pervasive character of the *ātman* that has entered into it as its self. Even the dream state is a psychic experience which may be traced to previous experiences registered in the psycho-physical complex and dreams often reveal the character of the dreamer and sometimes have a prophetic value. But Rāmānuja explains them morally as the wonderful creations of *Īsvara* in accordance with the merit or demerit of the dreamer. In dreams the divinity creates specific objects suited to the specific merit or demerit of the *jīva*.[1] The pleasure or pain experienced in that state is the result of the law of retribution and is as real as the moral life lived in the waking state. But it is purely subjective or private and has not the objective reality of the waking state which is the common theatre for all individuals and at all times. The distinction between what is private and what is public is one of degree and does not affect their reality. The theory of sublation is not applicable to these distinct and real experiences.

[1] *S.B.E.*, Vol. XLVIII. p. 120; *Bṛ. Up.*, VI. iii. 10 and *Vēdānta Sūtras*, III. ii. 3.

Epistemology is ultimately founded on the philosophy of religion which combines validity and value in the concept of the self as real reality and the true of the true. Thus all empirical knowledge is a partial revelation of reality or Self as the truth of truths and the distinction between *pramā* and *bhrama* (truth and error) is not absolute. When the ideal of knowledge is realized in *mukti*, *jñāna* becomes all-pervasive and the *mukta* knows everything. Then essence and existence become one.

Rāmānuja devotes a special section to the criticism of the theory of *avidyā* held by S'aṅkara. The *Advaitic* theory of *avidyā* holds that *avidyā* is neither real nor non-real, nor both and is therefore inexplicable. For example, in the illusion caused by mistaking the shell for silver, there is a misunderstanding which is indeterminable. It is first felt to be real and then rejected as unreal when there is true knowledge of the thing and it cannot be both real and unreal. It is *adhyāsa* or false super-imposition, because the silver cognition is superimposed on the shell cognition which is a felt 'this.' While the *Advaitin* frankly admits the indefinability of this illusion, he severely condemns other theories and gives them no quarter. The *asatkhyāti* of the *S'ūnyavādin* is, according to the *Advaitin*, untenable, as it says that the void is knowable in the same way as the substance on which the super-imposition occurs is itself non-existent. In the given example, silver is *tuccha* or non-existent. But it is impossible to cognize *s'ūnya*. The *Vijñānavādin* belongs to a more moderate school of Buddhism and his theory of error known as *ātmakhyāti* is based on a kind of subjective idealism. It explains the illusion as a mental state or psychic presentation which appears to be something external. But the idea is really of the object and not the object itself. A perishing

psychosis cannot cognize itself. The defects of idealism are sought to be remedied by the realistic schools of *Vaibhāṣika* and *Sautrāntika* and by the *Mīmāmsaka* and the *Naiyāyīka*. The *Mīmāṁsaka* theory of *akhyāti* or non-apprehension accepts the reality of both the cognitions, the perceived shell and the conceived or remembered silver, and traces the mistake to a defect in the tools of knowledge on account of which we fail to notice that silver is a recollected element. In the *anyathākhyāti* of the logician or *Naīyāyika* also, both shell and silver are real things. Shell is, however, wrongly perceived as another real object, namely, silver. The non-existence of shell means the existence of another object, silver, and this error is subjective. Rāmānuja's theory is also realistic and is objected to by the *Advaitin* on the ground that nothing can exist outside consciousness. His pragmatic method of verification may be convenient, but is not consistent. Truth may work, but what works is not necessarily true. The *Advaitin* thus demolishes all other theories of illusion and then says that his own theory cannot be explained and is *anirvacanīya*.

Avidyā, according to *Advaita*, is said to be the innate obscuration of pure consciousness which somehow divides the absolute and distorts it into the world of difference. It is an innate error which is beginningless, positive and indeterminable, though it can be removed by *jñāna*. The universal experience 'I do not know' refers to ignorance and is indefinite. In sleep where there is a temporary cessation of the consciousness of duality and difference, ignorance remains in its causal state or *kāraṇa s'arīra*. It is owing to *avidyā* that Brahman, which is *sat, cit, ānanda*, is confused with the empirical self which is *anṛta* or transient, *jaḍa* or inert and

duḥkha or miserable, and this confusion is called *adhyāsa* and is the cause of all the evils of *samsāra*. *Avidyā* is thus the root of error in philosophy, original confusion or misconception. It is the basis of this baseless world of space-time-cause like the rope-snake illusion. Brahman alone is and what is not Brahman is false as it is different from it as in the rope-snake illusion. Difference cannot exist by itself, and it is only a distortion of reality. To trace the cause of *avidyā* is illegitimate as the concept of causality itself has its origin in *avidyā*. Pure consciousness is the locus (*ās'raya*) of *avidyā* and also its object. It is ever self effulgent and *avidyā* cannot really conceal it, nor does it reside in the *jīva* as the *jīva* itself is its creation. Like the sun that shines unaffected by the mist, the *ātman* is *svayamjyōtis* and is not affected by *avidyā*. *Avidyā* is somehow there in Brahman, we know not why, and it only means that thought cannot reach what is beyond thought. *Avidyā* is indefinable, as it is neither real nor unreal nor both. It is not real as it is dissolved in the state of *mukti*; it is real as it now exists: and it cannot be both. It is a frank statement of the self-contradictions of life, though the absolute is beyond such discrepancy.

Though *avidyā* transcends explanation, many explanations are given to account for its origin and nature. According to the 'reflection theory,' the *jīva* or *ahaṅkāra* is a reflection of Brahman in the *antaḥkaraṇa* due to *avidyā* which is the subjective side of *māyā*. It makes the world a dream and a delusion, and the *jīva* a mere phantasm. The 'phenomenon theory' refutes the view and defines *avidyā* as a fact of finiteness which some how limits the limitless. *Avidyā* is a fall from *jñāna*, and is not a fictitious something. The world is unreal, but not illusory, and the *jīva* is a fact of

experience and not a phantasm. The world has relative reality though its relation to the absolute cannot be explained. A third theory of *avidyā* denies phenomenal reality and explains the external object as the illusory projection of the perceiving consciousness and makes *Īs'vara* Himself a super-*jīva*. A fourth view denies *avidyā* itself as its recognition as a separate entity is an admission of the reality of two states, *jñāna* and *ajñāna*. Brahman exists for ever and *avidyā* is non-existent like the son of a barren woman. All schools of *Advaita* are on the whole agreed that it is *avidyā* that is the cause of all confusion and misery in life. Though it has no beginning, it has an end and in *mukti* it is stultified. The chief value of the concept of *avidyā* in the philosophy of *Advaita* is that it exposes the inadequacy of all dualistic theories though it is by itself inexplicable.

Rāmānuja, in his masterly introduction to his *S'rī Bhāṣya*, subjects this theory to severe criticism and his classical refutation of it is known as *saptavidha anupapati* or the sevenfold inadmissibility. The seven charges are *ās'raya anupapatti*, *tirōdhāna anupapatti svarūpānupapatti*, *anirvacanīya anupapatti*, *pramāṇa anupapatti*, *nivartakānupapatti*, and *nivṛtti anupapatti*. The first charge is that there can be no basis for the baseless fabrication of *avidyā*. The illusionist seeks to avoid the nihilism of the *Mādhyamika* by positing a locus, substratum or *adhiṣṭhāna* for *avidyā*. The seat of *avidyā* should be either the *jīva* or Brahman, neither of which is conceivable. It cannot be the *jīva* as the *jīva* itself is the fictitious creation of *avidyā*, nor can it be Brahman as Brahman is self-illumined and can never be enveloped by *avidyā*. To trace the locus of *avidyā* to the *jīva* and that of the *jīva* to *avidyā* is to commit

the fallacy of *anyōnyās'raya* or mutual dependence. How the non-dual consciousness is caught up in duality is the supreme riddle of *Advaita*. Besides, a philosophy which discards the notion of substance and substratum as mediaeval and scholastic is not justified in utilizing it in its own doctrine of *ās'raya*. *Avidyā* has no resting place and is therefore nothing. The next objection is that there can be really no obscuration or *tīrōdhāna* of Brahman at all. *Brahmas'varūpa* is *jñāna* and is self-luminous. Either it is pure consciousness or not. If it is the former, it cannot be obscured, obstructed or destroyed by nescience. But if it is covered by *avidyā*, it is virtually destroyed by it. How or why *s'vayamjyōtis* veils itself is the stumbling block of S'aṅkara *Vēdānta*. The third objection relates to the understanding of the *svarūpa* or nature of *avidyā*. *Avidyā* is either real or unreal. If it is an entity or *bhāva rūpa*, then it is inherent in Brahman as *mulāvidyā* and cannot be destroyed ; *Advaita* is disproved by positing two reals. If it is unreal, as the more thoroughgoing monist says, there is no *mūlāvidyā* or *tūlāvidyā* as one or many. The fourth criticism is levelled against the *anirvacanīya* theory of indefinability. Theorizing activity is the actual work of thought and to say that there is a theory which is indefinable (*sadasadvilakṣaṇa*) is meaningless. If *avidyā* is neither bare negation nor significant negation, but is an indeterminable something which somehow infects reality, it is a something which can never be sublated. The philosophic humility which underlies the admission of *anirvacanīya* is mere mock humility as the *avidyā* theory mercilessly attacks other theories with the devastating dialectics of a Nāgārjuna. The *Advaitin* first explains *avidyā* as a phenomenon, then as an illusion, and, when he is cornered, explains it away as indeterminable. The fifth charge is that the theory

of *avidyā* is not supported by *s'āstraic* authority or any other *pramāṇa.*[1] Illusion is an abnormal phenomenon and it is opposed to the first principles of philosophy to treat the abnormal as its starting point. The terms *asatya* (unreal) and *nāsti* (is not), which are opposed to *satya* (the real) and *asti* (is), refer not to the unreal or the non-existent but to non-sentient objects. *Nivartaka anupapatti* is the criticism of the theory of the sublation of *avidyā*. *Ajñāna* cannot be sublated or dispelled by *jñāna*, as *jñāna* is itself the effect of *ajñāna*. But if it is something given, it can be removed only by spiritual discipline and not by the mere knowledge of self-identity. If Brahman is ever existent and *avidyā* non-existent, then the term *mumukṣutva* conveys no meaning at all. The last criticism is known as *nivṛttiyanupapatti* and is the objection to the *Advaitic* theory of *mukti*. *Brahmajñāna* is not, according to *Advaitins*, the *jñāna* of Brahman, but it is *jñāna* that is Brahman. It is said that *jñāna* stultifies *ajñāna* and then stultifies itself; if so, *jñāna* is an act of spiritual suicide. With the vanishing of *avidyā*, *jagat* and *Īs'vara* also perish and *Advaita* is nihilistic.

These charges are further elaborated by Vēdānta Dēs'ika in his polemical work, the *S'ata Dūṣaṇī*. The objections may be classified under the different headings adopted in this philosophic study and summarized as follows: From the standpoint of epistemology, the theory of *avidyā* and *adhyāsa* leads to agnosticism and scepticism. If

[1] The recognition of *anupalabdhi*, or the absence of apprehension as a separate *pramāṇa* is riddled with self-contradiction as *avidyā* which obscures pure consciousness is felt to be there as positive indefinite and yet is false. Even in the proposition 'I do not know,' I admit the fact of *avidyā* and the 'I' persists as a real self. To say that *avidyā* is somehow there and sublated later by *jñāna* is to admit the duality of *avidyā* and *jñāna* and get involved in the dualism between the two. If *avidya* is bare negation, the question of removing it does not arise.

Brahman is ever self-realized, there is no need for a philosophy to expound it. If Brahman cannot be the object of knowledge, it cannot be sought by the *mumukṣu*. If whatever is knowable is false, Brahman is also false. The indeterminate has at least the quality of being indeterminate. To say that it transcends all relational thought including Vedic knowledge is to commit intellectual suicide and *s'ruticide*. The theory of knowledge is thus the theory of the denial of knowledge. The monistic ontology of *nirguṇa* Brahman as pure consciousness without any content borders on nihilism. *Nirguṇa* Brahman has the quality of being *nirguṇa*. Consciousness cannot be aware of itself without the self as its subject. *Advaita* fails to explain the relation between the one and the many, being and becoming, affirmation and negation and the absolute and the relative. Difference cannot be denied without denying identity as the two are relative. *Advaitic* cosmology suffers from the defects of pan-illusionism and acosmism. If Brahman, the subject or substratum, is real, the universe is equally real and not an illusion. If the universe is an illusion, Brahman also is conditioned by it and is illusory. Nescience is an inexplicable something, and the distinction between *māyā* and *avidyā* is meaningless. To say that the world is a magic show created by the *māyin* makes the creator a conjurer. If the effect is an illusion superposed on the cause, the cause is also infected. The psychology of *Advaita* is equally defective as it virtually refutes the existence of the *jiva* and is engulfed in subjectivism. The denial of many selves on logical grounds is also the denial of even the single self theory. If the self that has consciousness is false, consciousness itself is false. There is no need for the theory of a *sākṣin* as its purpose is served by the self as a knowing entity. Monistic ethics brings out the discrepancy between *karma* and *jñāna*, and concludes

that the pure consciousness sublates the moral ego and transcends the distinction between good and evil. In *Advaita* religion occupies a subordinate position in relation to philosophy, as the God of religion is said to be less than the absolute owing to the discrepancy between two wills, finite and infinite. If so, religion is finally sublated in philosophy, and has no meaning at all. *Jñāna* is said to dispel the dualistic consciousness arising from *avidyā*. But even *jñāna* results from *ajñāna*, and is not different from it. *Jīvanmukti* is self-contradictory as *jīvātman* with embodiedness cannot co-exist with *mukti*, which is freedom from it. *Mukti* cannot admit of degrees, stages and divisions. If the *jīva* is identical with *Īs'vara*, then *mukti* is absolute and there can no longer be any question of other *jīvas* and *Īs'vara* or *kārya* Brahman existing in the empirical state of *avidyā* and *māyā*. Besides, the world process should cease to exist after the first instance of *jīvanmukti*, but it continues in spite of it. If *avidyā* or *māyā* is ultimately non-existent and Brahman is ever identical with itself, there is no problem for the *mumukṣu*, and therefore no need for *mukti*. Thus, from every standpoint, *Advaitic* monism is found to be inconsistent with every kind of *pramāṇa*.

Rāmānuja sums up the defects of the monistic theory of *avidyā* ending in the philosophy of *ēka-jīva* as follows: From the standpoint of pure consciousness everything is false. *S'āstra* is false, the knowledge derived from the *sāstra* is false, the *guru-s'iṣya* relation is false. The idea that everything is false itself arises from the falsity of *sāstra* itself.[1] This relentless refutation of *Advaita* leads him to the reconstruction of philosophy in terms of *satkhyāti* or *yathārtakhyāti* or what may be called the 'yes' philosophy. It affirms that what exists

[1] *Vēdārtha Saṅgraha* (Vasudevachariar's edition), p. 19.

(*sat*) is alone known. Reality is always *savis'ēṣa* and not *nirvis'ēṣa*, and in apprehending a thing as it is we also comprehend what it is. The 'that' is qualified by the 'what.' *Satkhyāti* is not realism in its modern sense as it insists on the reality of nature in all its aspects, physical, spiritual and divine. Its meaning is fully brought out in the thesis of *sad-vidyā*, that by knowing the one all is known (*ēka vijñānēna sarva-vijñānam*). By knowing Brahman, the ground of the universe, the universe also is known. The universe is ensouled by Brahman (*Brahmātmaka*). It comes from *sat*, and not from *asat*, and therefore is *sat*. Brahman is one as the *prakārin* and the many as the *prakāras*, and both are real. The system of nature and the society of *jīvas* derive their meaning and value from Brahman who is the inner self of all. There fore every thing thought and word ultimately connotes Brahman. Thus, by knowing the one we know the many, as its *vis'ēṣaṇa*, *prakāra* or *s'arīra* and, by knowing the many, we know the one that is changeless and eternal. In this way Rāmānuja gives an extended meaning of *satkhyāti* in the light of *sadvidyā* and concludes that, since Brahman is real, the world is also real and true. He interprets *avidyā* ethically by equating it with *karma* and concludes that the *jīva* freed from *avidyā-karma* sees all things in Brahman and Brahman in all things.

CHAPTER III

THE THEORY OF TWO BRAHMANS CRITICIZED

THE chief issue in metaphysics is the problem whether the absolute of philosophy is the God of religion and whether there are two Brahmans, *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*. Of all the *Vēdāntic* schools, *Advaita* alone makes a distinction between *saguṇa* Brahman or Brahman with attributes and *nirguṇa* Brahman or Brahman without attributes and supports it by the authority of the *S'ruti* and the *Sūtras*. It is in the light of this dual standpoint that S'aṅkara expounds the *Vēdānta Sūtras* dealing with the meaning of *sadvidyā*, *ānandamaya*, *ubhaya liṅga* and *kārya* Brahman. Firstly *sadvidyā* brings out, according to S'aṅkara, the contrast between the *sat* without a second or the indeterminate and *Īs'vara*, the determinate. The *sat* is *advitīya* (without a second) and *nirguṇa* and the moment it wills the many and becomes the manifold, it is said to entangle itself in the illusions of relatedness. Caught up, as it were, in the duality of the subject-object relation, it becomes *Īs'vara* or the determinate. Determination is negation and therefore *saguṇa* Brahman is finite and is a mere appearance. But *nirguṇa* Brahman is pure undifferentiated being or consciousness without the distinction of subject and object. Secondly, Brahman as *ānandamaya* is *saguṇa* Brahman, the logical highest, or the absolute made in the moulds of thought. The moment we think of Brahman, *ānanda*

lapses into *vijñāna* and the not-self enters into the integrity of being and makes it being-becoming.[1] The absolute as the intuitional highest becomes *Īs'vara* as its highest conceptual reading. Predication as a logical relation perverts reality. When the contentless bliss of Brahman is logically defined as blissfulness, it is only maximum bliss with an element of imperfection. In *saguṇa* Brahman there is a 'balance of pleasure over pain,' but there is no absolute joy. Thirdly, in the *Ubhaya Liṅga Adhikaraṇa*, S'aṅkara makes the same distinction. Strictly speaking, Brahman cannot at the same time be transcendentally formless being and phenomenalized *Īs'vara*, on account of the self-contradiction of the finite-infinite inherent in the dual idea. The *nēti* method of the *Upaniṣad* denies only the pluralistic consciousness fictitiously superimposed on Brahman and not Brahman itself, as such denial would favour the nihilistic philosophy of universal void and be a stultification of the entire *Vēdānta*. The formless, characterless Brahman is, however, spatialized and personalized by the religious consciousness in the interests of devout meditation. Fourthly, Brahman is apprehended metaphysically as the self-identical absolute and is the metaphysical highest and not *Īs'vara* or *kārya* Brahman or effected Brahman who is the God of theology. It is only the effected Brahman that has a world of His own which is attained by devotion. Spatial and temporal categories apply to the empirical world and cannot have a transcendental use. Jaimini who refers to the world of Brahman is only on the theological level, but Bādari, the metaphysician, rejects the illusions of space and time and the values of progress and attainment.[2] *Nirguṇa* Brahman is

[1] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 168.
[2] Param jaiminir mukhyatvāt. S. B., IV. iii. 11.
kāryam bādarir asya gatyupapattéḥ. S. B., IV. iii. 6.

alogical, amoral and impersonal and the idea of *saguṇa* Brahman is only a concession to ignorance.

Advaita as a critical analysis of reality without seeking the aid of *S'ruti* may be viewed as subject philosophy, subject-object philosophy or object philosophy. The first is an idealistic view that accepts the *Upaniṣadic* truth that the knower cannot be known, that it is the 'I' beyond the 'me' and that it alone constitutes reality. *Avidyā* objectifies pure consciousness and makes it a semblance and *Īs'vara* Himself is *dṛs'ya* or an object of thought. *Dṛs'ya* is illusion externalized and can be thought away. Idealism ends in subjectivism and subjectivism ends in the super-subjectivism of *ēka-jīva-vāda* in which the whole universe emerges from the single 'I' and merges into or is sublated in it. This method is adopted by the *Yōgavāsiṣṭa* and has a Buddhistic tinge. According to the illusion theory, *Īs'vara* is the *māyin* or the arch-illusionist, the 'first figment of cosmic nescience,' who projects the world-show like a juggler. He is the self-luminous Brahman reflected in the *sātvic* medium of *māyā* or the infinite finitized by the *upādhis* [1] or the sum-total of semblances. The phenomenon theory says that relational thought betrays the self-contradiction and disruption between existence and content, and is therefore dualistic and divisive. The idea of *saguṇa* Brahman is riddled with the contradictions of being-becoming, one-many. The God of religion is thus less real than the absolute of philosophy and though there is no real difference between dust and deity, there are degrees of reality. God is the logical highest or the highest reading of the absolute. *Īs'vara* is an aggregate of the *jīvas* and is the concrete universal realized in

[1] These ideas are developed in the theories known as *bimba-pratibimba vāda* and *avaccheda vāda*.

the world of particulars. The distinction between phenomenal and transcendental reality is a recognition of the object philosophy and the need for theistic faith in a personal god. *Saguṇa* Brahman is the absolute cast in the moulds of religion and has the inner necessity of self-transcendence. Still another school of *Advaita* holds that Brahman is ever existent and *māyā* is ever non-existent and *Advaita* is no-philosophy or religion as it affirms what is and does not theorize about it, in its academic and practical aspects. *Advaita* thus oscillates between Buddhistic idealism and theism and either accepts or denies *Īs'vara*. If it accepts the existence of *Īs'vara*, it implies the co-existence of two Brahmans, the Personal and the Impersonal, and, guided by ethico-religious motive, posits the practical reality of *saguṇa* Brahman ; but, if it denies *Īs'vara*, it follows the devastating dialectic of Nāgārjuna and ends in *s'ūnyavāda*.

The *Advaitic* distinction between two Brahmans is controverted and rejected by the other *Vēdāntins*, especially by the other monistic schools like the *Bhēdābhēda* of Bhāskara, as a speculation riddled with fallacies, without possessing any value. The contention of the *Māyāvādin* that determination is negation is not supported by *S'ruti* and has no rational basis. The *Upaniṣad* points to the reality of spiritual truths which can be determined only spiritually and not dialectically. The dialectic of *Māyāvāda* is self-destructive and affirms nothing.[1] The thesis of *sadvidyā* is the discovery of the *sat* or *ādēs'a* by realizing which everything else is realized and it is a cosmological account of the One differentiating itself into the many and becoming the manifold of the

[1] For a detailed criticism of *Māyāvāda*, vide, Chap. V of the author's work *The Philosophy of Bhēdābhēda*.

subjects and objects of experience. The manifold consists of distincts and not of opposites. The *Advaitic* acceptance of *pariṇāma-vāda* or the theory that Brahman evolves into the universe with a view to its later rejection in terms of *vivarta* or phenomenal or illusory development is a typical example of the self-contradiction implied in its philosophy of two standpoints. In addition to this fallacy, it is open to the charge of *s'ruta-hāni* or text torture and *as'ruta kalpana* or mere fabrication. That the absolute divides itself into finite centres may be a cosmological mystery. The self-creative activity of Brahman may be a puzzle, but is not a fiction. Self-differentiation is no denial of the integrity of Brahman as it is *savis'ēṣa* and not *nirvis'ēṣa* and the true meaning of negation is not bare negation or nothingness, but is significant negation presupposing affirmation. *Abhāva* is not a separate category or *pramāṇa*. When it fills up in meaning with reference to the context, it is on a par with affirmation. When we say that there is no jar on the ground, we mean that we see only the ground and not the jar. When we say that Brahman is *nirguṇa*, we mean that it is not *prakṛti*, but the supreme self other than *prakṛti*. This view is called the *bhāvāntarābhāva* theory of negation or negativing the existence of something else. All *abhāva* resolves itself into a *bhāva* other than the correlate. But if determination is considered a defect of reality or *avidyā*, then Brahman would be infested by the all-enveloping darkness that somehow arises from it and there would be no way of escape from this gloom. The causal category that explains Brahman as the first cause and final cause of the world order is different from the *Sāṅkhyan* theory of *pariṇāma* or evolution from *prakṛti* or matter and the *Naiyāyika* theory of *samavāya*, as the term cause is ultimately identical with the ground and the inner purpose of world progress. It is thus not a category

of thought that is used to explain what is beyond it. It is not an altar to an unknown God, but is a spiritual way of stating that the infinite expresses itself in the finite as its informing self with a view to infinitizing it and thus of overcoming the conflict between the mechanical and the teleological applications of the term. The *Vēdānta Sūtras* begin with the philosophic definition of Brahman as the ground or reason of finite existence and end with the knowledge of Brahman as the goal of spiritual experience. The Kantian problem of metaphysics and religion "What can I know?" and "What may I hope for?" is thus satisfactorily solved. The *Sadvidyā* enquires into the meaning of *sat* as the ultimate fact of knowledge and concludes that the secondless *sat* is the supreme self and is the home of the eternal values of life. But the *Sanmātravādin* refers to bare being as a logical abstraction which may lapse into the universal void and the eternal night of the absolute.

The *Taittirīya* text that says that Brahman is *ānandamaya* is an aesthetic description of the abounding and boundless bliss of Brahman which cannot be explained in terms of the logical intellect. It has no reference to the dialectic opposition between the thesis of *ānanda* and the antithesis of *ānandamaya* as a fall from *ānanda*, As the text starts with *Brahmajñāna* and ends with *Brahmānanda* as the highest end of life,[1] it is not aware of the distinction between the knowledge of *nirguṇa* Brahman as the intuitional highest and the attainment of *saguṇa* Brahman as the logical highest. To say that S'aṅkara is on the intuitional level and Rāmānuja on the logical is unfair to both of them; and the distinction between intuition and logic becomes a yawning

[1] ānandam brahmaṇo vidvān, *Taitt.* Up., Ānanda-valli, 4 and 9.

gulf between the two. Brahman is and has bliss, and the predication of bliss to Brahman does not pervert its nature but enriches it. The idea of transcendental bliss does not sublate *saguṇa* Brahman, but affirms its knowability by purified thought. The description of *Īs'vara* as a self caught up in the contradiction of pleasure and pain and as a glorified *samsārin* is not supported by *s'āstra* or by practical reason. *Īs'vara*, according to S'aṅkara, controls *māyā* and is not controlled by it.

S'ruti would stultify itself if it defined the nature of Brahman as *saguṇa* or having attributes with a view to deprive it of all content by later thought. The *nēti* or negative method employed by the *Upaniṣad* denies only the adequacy of employing the categories of logic to establish the reality of Brahman and its chief aim is the criticism of the pantheistic view that all is Brahman and the denial of the finitude of reality but not of the finite itself. The absolute is in the conditioned as *cit* and *acit* and it is not as the conditioned. It transcends the world of relativity, but does not sublate it. Brahman is formless but not characterless. If the absolute of metaphysics is not the god of *upāsanā* or meditation and worship but the effectuation of illusion, there would be no need for spirituality and the striving for *mukti*. The distinction between the metaphysical highest realized here and now in *jīvanmukti* and the theological highest or the phenomenalized or spatialized Brahman attained in the world of Brahman that is yonder is refuted by Bhāskara on the ground that *Vēdāntic* freedom is won by spiritual effort by transcending the phenomenal world in its macrocosmic and microcosmic aspects. *Avidyā* is dispelled only when *māyā*, of which it is a part, is stultified. *Jñāna* connotes the removal of *avidyā*. If

mukti is only a case of partial disillusionment, it is no *mukti* at all, and, strictly speaking, it should be *Īs'vara mukti* or *Brahma mukti* as *avidyā-māyā* envelops not the *jiva* which is the effect of *avidyā* but the self-identity and integrity of Brahman itself. Brahman is transcendental because it is beyond the empirical world or *samsāra maṇḍala*. If *mukti* is the sublation of *avidyā* which is really non-existent like the square-circle, it is immaterial whether it is freedom in embodiment here and now or freedom from embodiment in the world beyond. S'aṅkara, however, makes a concession to anthropomorphism and guarantees eventual freedom or *krama mukti* to the theist who in his ignorance clothes the absolute in space-time and humanizes it. Even from the standpoint of textual interpretation, the opinion of S'aṅkara that Bādari's view expounded first is the *Sūtrakāra's siddhānta* and that it is followed by the *prima facie* view of Jaimini which it rebuts, is "altogether inadmissible,"[1] it being the invariable practice of the *Vēdānta Sūtras* as well as the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa Sūtras* to conclude the discussion of contested points with the statement of that view which is to be accepted as the authoritative one. It is arbitrary to say that Jaimini is only on the theological level and is without the rational insight of Bādari. The religious consciousness is outraged by the relegation of *saguṇa* Brahman who is at first described as the creator of the cosmic process to the level of Hiraṇyagarbha, the first born of Brahman, when evaluating *mukti*. If *saguṇa* Brahman is less than the absolute, it suffers from self-deception as it is the first figment of cosmic nescience, from the self-contradiction of its finite-infinite nature and from the infinite hardships of *samsāra*, as the aggregate of the *jīvas* and finally it has less chance of *mukti* than the *jīvanmukta*. But if it is conjoined

[1] *S. B. E.*, No. XXXIV p. 91. (Introduction).

with *māyā* and its *s'akti* and becomes its controller, the theory has a family resemblance to the *pariṇāma-vāda* of *Bhēdābhēda*.

The other schools of *Bhēdābhēda* are equally strong in their repudiation of the theory of *nirguṇa* Brahman and in upholding the reality of *saguṇa* Brahman in the *bhinnābhinna* relation which does equal justice to the aspects of identity and difference. According to Yādava, being or *sanmātra* is the essential nature of *Brahmatva*, and it is the undifferentiated that differentiates itself by its *pariṇāma s'akti* or power of evolution into *Īs'vara*, *cit* and *acit*, each having its own form and function. The absolute streams forth in a series of emanations till its irradiation reaches the realm of matter. It is the plenitude of being and is not to be confused with the bad or quantitative infinite. The absolute is not *Īs'vara*, but is *Īs'vara* and the finite centres. There is a unity in trinity, but each has its own distinctness and content. *Īs'vara*, though an element of the absolute, is not the effectuation of *māyā*, but has the perfections of God. The *jīva* is not fictitious or formal, but is a real modal expression or feature of reality and is both finite and infinite. *Īs'vara* and the *jīva* do not suffer from inner contradiction, but are correlative factors in the totality of being. The infinite evolves into the finite and remains as itself in spite of its modal manifestations. Nimbārka, in his philosophy of mono-dualism, avoids the extremes of monism and pluralism when he explains the absolute as both static and dynamic. In relation to the world, Brahman is dynamic, but is not a relative absolute and, when it is out of relation to it, it is static and exists in itself as self-complete. In its *abhēda* or non-difference aspect, Brahman is *s'akta* and is self-related, and in the *bhēdābhēda* aspect it is

s'akti and connotes distinction and dependence and evolves into the forms of *cit* and *acit*. The *Dvaita-advaita* school of Nimbārka has greater affinities with *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* than with the schools of Bhāskara and Yādava owing to its insistence on the *jīva* as a distinct entity that derives its form from Brahman and depends on it.

The *Vēdāntic* exposition of *bhēdābhēda* is serviceable to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* on account of its refutation of the theory of *nirguṇa* Brahman. The view of Bhāskara that *saguṇa* Brahman is determinate but formless is repugnant to the other schools which accept the reality of *Īs'vara* as distinct from the finite centres. Likewise the theory of Yādava, that *Brahmatva* inheres in *Īs'vara*, *cit* and *acit*, makes it an abstract universal without connection of content. As being is fully present in its parts, the whole is the part, and dust and divinity would become one. But if the whole is greater than the part, *Īs'vara* is *Brahmāms'a* or part of Brahman, and is less than the absolute and is finite and helpless like the *jīva* itself. The view that Brahman is conditioned by *upādhis* or limiting adjuncts is wild and vicious [1] and is more mischievous than the illusion theory, as it attributes the evils, errors and other imperfections of life to Brahman that is eternally pure and perfect. If the unconditioned Brahman is conditioned by these limiting adjuncts, good and evil follow necessarily from the divine nature, and God suffers from the sorrows of *samsāra* in His own infinite way. From the supreme light of *sat*, there blaze forth a Rāma and a Rāvaṇa. This view affords no hope of the stability of *mukti*. Likewise the Nimbārka view that the *s'akti* of Brahman alone changes and not Brahman is futile,

[1] Brahmajñānapakṣādapi pāpiyān ayam bhēdābhēdapakṣaḥ.—*Vēdārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 177.

as Brahman and its *s'akti* are inseparable. *S'āktavāda* does not favour the theory of *māyā* or *upādhis* as it posits an eternal measuring or finitizing principle or *s'akti* that is immanent in the infinite and refers to Brahman as impersonal and personal at the same time. The infinite is in each part and each part is infinite and aspires to become God. But *S'āktavāda* traces evil and error to the heart of reality and sees no difference between Brahman and a block of stone. The concept of identity in difference is palpably false as the co-existence of contradictories is impossible. The true meaning of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* is not identity, non-duality or unity, but is the inseparable relation between a thing and its attribute or *dharmin* and *dharma*. The relation between the infinite and the finite is to be understood in terms not of *Advaita* or *Bhēdābhēda* but of the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* truth of *prakāra* and *prakārin*. *Bhēdābhēda* is on the horns of a dilemma. If it stresses the *abhēda* or non-different side of *ēkībhāva* or oneness like the school of Bhāskara, its logical conclusion is *Māyāvāda* which it rejects. But if it stresses the *bhēda* or difference side like the schools of Yādava and Nimbārka, its logical and ethical conclusion is *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and the history of *Bhēdābhēda* definitely favours the latter alternative. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* alone takes the dilemma by the horns.

The absolutistic tradition in the west which affords parallels to *Vēdāntic* thought may be shown to have more affinity with *Bhēdābhēda* than with *Advaita*. A study of this question is essential to the understanding of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, as *Bhēdābhēda* is often confused with it by western scholars. It is fully discussed in my book *The Philosophy of Bhēdābhēda*. It is said that, if a man has no Spinozism, he has no standing in philosophy and some modern Indian philosophers discern

the *Visiṣṭādvaitic* strain in the fundamental idea of Spinoza. Spinoza is interpreted in different ways. If substance excludes all determination, and the attributes are not real but only what the intellect perceives as the essence of the substance, the view of Spinoza resembles that of S'aṅkara more than that of Rāmānuja. But John Caird rejects this theory of substance as a barren abstraction and gives a Hegelian version of Spinozism. Substance is to be explained by the principle of self-determination and not indetermination. The absolute is the self that, by its inner impulse, goes out of itself to objects that are opposed to it and then returns to itself. But others interpret it as a philosophy of religion which suggests similar lines of thought in the Yādava school. Substance is self-conditioned and all-inclusive and its modes are conditioned reals that derive their being from substance. Substance or God is the free cause of all things and is *natura naturans*; but in the form of mode it is *natura naturata*. Substance determines itself to modes. It is not the totality of modes but is the modes. The modes of matter are as divine as the modes of the mind. The mode in its particularity and contingence is finite and perishing, but as part of the essence of reality it is infinite and eternal. If this exposition is correct, the theory of *natura naturans* and the truth that the unity of the absolute is realized in the modal multiplicity of thinking things and objects resemble more the *Bhēdābhēda* idea of Brahman and *Brahma pariṇāma vāda* than the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* truth of Brahman as the *prakārin*. If substance is the same as the world of nature, there is no need for God, and the theory becomes a kind of materialistic monism; if it is interpreted idealistically, it very nearly affirms the illusoriness of the finite. Some Indian thinkers recognize the affinity between the monadic theism of Leibnitz and the teaching of Rāmānuja.

The resemblance is, on the whole, superficial as the idea of God as the monad of monads is distinct from the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* idea of Brahman as the *antaryāmin* or Inner Self of all beings. Reality is qualified by plurality, but is not itself plural, as the existence of exclusive monads does not make for unity.

A very close affinity is recognized between Rāmānuja and Hegel in some notable expositions of Indian thought. To both, the absolute is the real for thought with an element of negativity in it, and is the synthetic unity of relational and logical experience. It is the triune unity consisting of God, soul and nature. Brahman is *Īs'vara* cast in the moulds of logic and is a self-conscious personality with the not-self as an integral element of His being, and He loses Himself in order to find Himself. Experience is an identity in difference, a synthesis of opposites, and *Īs'vara* is the generalized concept of such experience, and is the one-many, being-becoming, infinite-finite. A distinction is drawn by some thinkers between the Hegelian synthesis or dialectic unity of opposites and Rāmānuja's synthesis of distincts. The modern *Advaitic* exponents are generally agreed that Rāmānuja is only on the *vijñāna* or logical level while S'aṅkara is on the higher level of intuition. Rāmānuja's Brahman, according to them, is the logical highest or the real for thought, and is less than S'aṅkara's Brahman or the intuitional highest which is the real in itself. The logical intellect changes the intuition of the indeterminate or *nirguṇa* Brahman into the organic unity of the concrete universal or *saguṇa* Brahman. But the panlogism of Hegel is entirely distinct from *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* thought and has more affinity with *Bhēdābhēda*, and calls for similar criticism. In attempting the fusion of the opposites of identity

and difference, panlogism ends in confusion, and its rationalism lapses into materialism, as it fails to explain the reality of the contingent elements in experience. In mounting to the higher category, the lower is not surmounted or transcended, and finitude and evil remain as integral factors of reality. An infinity of universals cannot make the universe. If the world process is the perfection of the Idea, then *samsāra* is more real and valuable than salvation. No *upāsaka* or seeker after *mukti* adores an evolving, synthetic unity or a college of selves or a deified *samsārin*. The dialectical view of the one-many lands us in the defects of intellectualism, as the logical idea is hypostatized as the absolute. Every school of *Vēdānta* is clear that divinity can be established not by dialectic skill but by revelational faith and direct intuition.

The method of equating *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* with the notion of qualified non-dualism or the adjectival theory ol the absolute like that of Bosanquet is equally misleading and futile. Bosanquet's theory of judgment on its philosophical side rightly affirms that reality is knowable and that every thought refers to the absolute as the ultimate subject. To Bosanquet, the whole of reality is the subject of predication, and the life of logic is the spirit of totality that seeks the stability of thought in the concrete universal. The absolute is the self-related and unconditioned real, but is realized in the relative, and the finite self is a predicate having connection of content with the whole and derives its meaning from it. The finite self is finite-infinite, and has a double nature. As the finite, it is self-contradictory, has formal distinctness and exclusive self-feeling; but, as the infinite, it transcends itself and becomes stable in the whole. The finite thing is a collection of adjectives housed in the infinite and its individuation is due to the

limitations of space and time. The absolute is the meeting of extremes, and the God of religion is less than the all-inclusive whole and is only an appearance. Finiteness and imperfection are not annulled, but are transfigured, and they contribute to the whole. The adjectival theory of the absolute developed by Bosanquet denies *svarūpa aikya* or absolute identity, and affirms *vis'iṣṭa aikya* or attributive oneness; but it is more allied to *Bhēdābhēda* than to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. Both Bosanquet and Yādava insist on the postulation of identity in difference as the supreme law of thought, and expound the nature of the absolute as a concrete unity. But while Bosanquet accepts imperfection as an element of perfect life, though in a transmuted state, the *Bhēdābhēda-vādin*, relying on *s'ruti*, refers to Brahman as the perfect untainted by finitude and evil. Rāmānuja may agree with both in the logical idea of the finite self being a mode of the absolute, but he rejects the adjectival theory, and affirms the reality of the finite self as a substantive mode having focalized being or uniqueness.

Some modern *Advaitins* favour the dialectic method of Bradley and Nāgārjuna in demolishing the reality of the God of religion as only an appearance of reality riddled with self-contradictions. Every thought is relational and sunders the 'what' from the 'that.' Relation is external to the relata and involves self-discrepancy; but it points to the absolute which is trans-relational. If God is a self against other selves, he is only an appearance of the absolute and is finite. Short of the absolute, God cannot rest; but if he reaches it, he is lost. In the unity of the absolute, all ethical and religious contradictions are reconciled, and it is richer for every discord that it embraces and transmutes. Bradley, like Nāgārjuna and the monistic dialecticians, is very effective in abolishing the

appearances; but in his constructive philosophy he tries to save them as revelations of the absolute. The supra-relational and the relational are not continuous, and the dualism between the two is not overcome. While Hegel trusts thought, Bradley distrusts it. The scepticism of Kantian metaphysics has its conclusion in the agnosticism of Bradley, though, to escape scepticism, he says that reality is sentient experience. This is entirely different from the mystic intuition of Brahman.[1] There is as much contrast between S'aṅkara and Bradley as there is between Rāmānuja and Hegel; and both Bradley and Hegel belong on the whole to the *Bhēdābhēda* type. The absolute is not only beyond relational thought, but is conscious of that experience and is therefore the Supreme Self. It cannot, "like a sponge, suck in its own selfhood." The self is affirmed even in the act of denying it. Relations do relate and relational thought presupposes the absolute as a self-conscious being; and Royce identifies it with will. The absolute is unique with infinity as its character, and its will is expressed through individual wills. Fichte also stresses the ethical side of philosophy and his realistic idealism resembles *Bhēdābhēda*. The absolute is the self-active ego that posits itself by opposing the non-ego. This opposition is not external to consciousness, but is in consciousness itself. Like the white light broken up into coloured rays, the absolute limits itself and conquers the limitations. The pantheism of Fichte is midway between the views of S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja, and is allied to *Bhēdābhēda*, and it is not free from the perils of subjectivism. Schelling's idea of the absolute ego is aesthetic and mystical rather than metaphysical, and its idealism is like that of Yādava as it invests nature also with consciousness. But the unity is more of substance than of the self, and the absolute is

[1] *Vide* Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosobhy*, Vol. II, p. 526.

a neutrem, though it divides itself into subject and object. As Hegel observes, it is like the night in which all cows are black.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita cannot be identified with western pantheism, as the history of pantheism does not bring out any definite meaning, especially in its concept of the absolute and its relation to the finite. If pantheism means that all is God and equates God with the universe, no *Vēdāntic* school is pantheistic. The universe has its being in God, but is not God, and does not exhaust His infinity. If pantheism means the theory of 'one prodigious aggregated god,' everything is equally divine and equally worthless, and the moral and religious consciousness is outraged by this shallow pantheism. But if it means that God is all and that the universe is false, it is allied to pan-illusionism and acosmism. Acosmism has some relation to the theory of *niṣprapañca-niyōga-vāda*, but it is not *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. If pantheism has an idealistic trend and drifts towards monism, it starts with the self and ends with subjectivism. If it is identity or *aikya*-consciousness, it is akin to *Advaita*. If it is identified with the neo-Platonic theory of emanation which says that the world is the overflow of the one, it is an echo of the *Bhēdābhēda* view of *Brahmapariṇāma*. Likewise, the world view of Spinoza as *natura naturata* does not bring out the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* distinction between Brahman, *cit* and *acit*. The panlogism of Hegel, the realistic idealism of Fichte and the mysticism of Schelling have already been shown to blur the boundary lines between *Advaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and to drift towards *Bhēdābhēda*. Pantheism has the merit of recognizing the divineness of the universe and rejecting the ego-centric standpoint; but its fatal defect is the denial of the evilness of evil and the reality of the moral

consciousness. The all-God theory destroys God and the self that seeks God, and gives man a logical and moral holiday. The all-inclusive absolute of pantheism is so elastic as to provide for truth and error, goodness and evil, and it accommodates itself both to perfection and to imperfection. To say that whatever is is right is a denial of moral distinctions and a lapse into fatalism. If pantheism is the philosophy of pure immanence in which God merely transforms Himself into the universe, no *Vēdāntic* school is pantheistic as *Vēdānta* affirms transcendence as well as immanence. *Vēdānta*, including *Advaita* in its *vyāvahārik* or practical aspect, insists on the distinction between Brahman, *cit* and *acit*, the moral law of *karma* and the need for *mukti*.

The western concept of theism is also vague and is, in its modern version, influenced by the pantheistic idea of immanence, and is sometimes equated with personalism. Theism may be defined as the faith in a personal God as the Creator of the universe entering into personal relations with man with a view to redeeming him from his career of sin. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is not strictly theistic, as theism does not favour the idea of *apṛthaksiddhavis'ēṣaṇa* (of the *jīva* being an inseparable attribute of God), *vis'iṣta aikya* or attributive oneness, the mystic experience of ecstasy, and *s'arīra-s'arīri* unity. Nor is it to be identified with panillusionism which says that God is all and everything else is illusion. It is likewise different from emanational theories like those of Plotinus and the panlogism of Hegel which affirms that reality is rational. The term *Vēdānta* connotes not only a dialectic philosophy, but also a *dars'ana*, which is different from western philosophy. The terms *Dvaita*, *Advaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvāita* have each a clear and distinct meaning

and are different from the corresponding western varieties of theism, monism and pantheism. While the latter expound the nature of the relation between God and the universe, the former stress the spiritual side of experience and expound the nature of the relation between the finite self and the Infinite or God.

The criticism of the various theories of the absolute in the east as well as in the west enables us to determine precisely the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* idea of Brahman. The *Advaitic* view of two Brahmans is admittedly self-contradictory and refuted by the other *Vēdāntins*, notably by the *Bhēdābhēda-vādins* who uphold the monistic view of the absolute as *sat* or *saguṇa* Brahman. While Bhāskara affirms the reality of Brahman as formless but not characterless, Yādava and Nimbārka deny its being *nirguṇa* or attributeless and *niravayava* or formless; but Nimbārka's view of Brahman as the self-related (*svatantra sadbhāva*) in its *abhēda* aspect and the distinct and the dependent (*paratantra sadbhāva*) in its *bhēdābhēda* aspect has affinities with Rāmānuja's idea of God as *niyantā* or the immanent and eminent cause of the world order. Bhāskara denies the idea of an indefinable *māyā* or being-non-being infecting the very source of reality and making the finite a figment of *māyā*. He traces the world order to the self-conditioning nature of the absolute which is therefore *satyōpādhi* or real limiting adjuncts and not *mithyōpādhi* or unreal limiting adjuncts. If we substitute *pariṇāma* for *upādhi*, we arrive at the Yādava version of *Bhēdābhēda* which attributes equal reality to the aspects of identity and difference. If the cosmic process is traced to the creative urge of *s'akti* at the heart of reality, the Yādava view is replaced by the account of Nimbārka. The

philosophical transition from Nimbārka to Rāmānuja is the transition from *Bhēdābhēda* to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. Brahman is alogical and amoral, as it transcends reason, and *Vēdantic* exposition is often clothed in symbology and analogical ideas. For the rope-snake analogy employed by the *Māyāvādin*, Bhāskara uses the example of *ākās'a* in its unconditioned and conditioned aspects, or the spider and its web ; Yādava relies on the illustration of the simile of the sea and its waves and Nimbārka, on the closing and disclosing of the snake's body. Rāmānuja thinks of the analogy of light and luminosity or the relation between *s'arīra* and *s'arīrin* as the most appropriate analogy that brings out the nature of Brahman and its relation to the world of *cit* and *acit*. In the tradition of absolutism in the west, the being of Parmenides is like the *nirguṇa* Brahman of S'aṅkara, the One of Plotinus reminds us of the *sat* of Bhāskara, the substance of Spinoza suggests a similar trend of thought in Yādava and the ego of Fichte marks a definite transition from the indeterminate to the determinate, from the vague concepts of Being, One and Substance to the clear idea of the self. In this way, the history of philosophy in the east and the west discloses by its method of self-criticism, the inner truth that the metaphysical *sat* which is the one without a second is the supreme self of all beings, and that the absolute of philosophy is the God of religion.

Rāmānuja clinches the whole argument by the classical statement of his *siddhānta* which may be stated in his own words. " Brahman is at all times differentiated by the sentient and non-sentient beings that constitute its body, and it can be said to be one only without a second previous to creation. At that time, the differentiation of names and forms did not exist. That which makes the difference between plurality

and unity is the presence or absence of differentiation through names and forms. Says the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: 'Now all this was undifferentiated. It became differentiated by name and form.' Those who hold that the finite self is due to nescience and those who hold it to be due to a real limiting adjunct and those who hold that Brahman, whose essential nature is mere being, assumes by itself the threefold form of enjoying subjects, objects of enjoyment and supreme ruler—all the three of them explain the unity of Brahman in the *pralaya* or dissolution state only on the basis of the absence of differentiation by name and form. According to all the three, there is no absolute unity at any time for the potentiality of nescience, the limiting adjunct, or of the threefold distinction of subjects and objects of experience, and their ruler persists in the *pralaya* state also. There is, however, the following difference among the several views. The first implies that Brahman itself is under the illusive influence of beginningless *avidyā*. The second says that Brahman is itself in the state of bondage owing to the real and beginningless limiting adjunct. According to the third view, Brahman itself assumes different forms and experiences the unpleasant consequences of *karma*. But, according to our view, Brahman has for its body all sentient and non-sentient beings in the subtle and in the gross state. In the effected as well as in the causal condition, it is free from all shadow of imperfection, and is an infinity of perfections. All imperfection and suffering and all change belong not to Brahman, but only to the sentient and non-sentient beings which are its modes. This view removes all difficulties."[1] How the absolute divides itself into finite centres may be a riddle of thought or a mystery, but that it does so is a fact to the *mumukṣu* and

[1] *Srī Bhāṣya*, II. iii. 18.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita explains it in terms of the making of sentient beings into *muktas*.

The author of the *Vēdānta Sūtras* is a synoptic philosopher who identifies Brahman as the cosmological ground of all existents, *acit* as well as *cit*, with the same Brahman as the spiritual goal of experience. The term 'cause' is not a category of the 'understanding' as it cannot be really applied to transcendental reality, but is a cosmological 'idea' employed to bring out the self-identity of Brahman in the *pralaya* or dissolution, and the *s'ṛṣṭi* or creation, stages. The *sat* without a second is the 'unity of composition' in the pre-cosmic stage of *pralaya*, and is the cosmic self as the 'unity of manifestation,' in the *s'ṛṣṭi* stage. In both the stages, *acit* qualifies and embodies *cit* and *cit* qualifies and embodies Brahman which is the Self of the self. But in *pralaya*, the manifold of *acit* and *cit* is a real possibility. Rāmānuja accepts the theory of *sat-kārya-vāda* and denies *asat-kārya-vāda*. Creation is not out of nothing, but out of something. *Sat* is pre-existent and not non-existent. The possibility is so subtle that it is practically non-existent. Even in the non-dual experience of sound sleep which is said to prove *Advaita* analogically, nescience co-exists with the *sākṣin* as a real possibility. Possibility is said to be real when it can become actual. The difference between the two is thus only the difference between what is potential and what is actual. The term non-existence connotes the absence not of non-differentiation, but of cosmic self-differentiation into the world of *nāma-rūpa*. There is non-division in the sense that there is no distinction of name and form in *pralaya*. In both the states, Brahman, *cit* and *acit* are distinguishable, but are not divisible. *S'ṛṣṭi* is the self-differentiation of

the absolute into the pluralistic universe of *nāma-rūpa*. Brahman with the creative urge wills the many and becomes the manifold. It is the absolute that externalizes itself into the endless variations of space-time and embodied beings by entering into matter with the living self and energizing it. The cause and the effect in the *Vēdāntic* sense are non-different and their relation is not external or arbitrary, but is internal and organic. Effectuation is not an illusion or a self-enveloping process of reality, but it reveals the inner purpose of the divine nature and enriches spiritual life. Brahman as the cause is *natura naturans* and is Brahman as the effect or *natura naturata*, as the Self is the same in both the stages. The world is non-different from Brahman in so far as it is the effect or *upādēya* of Brahman. The essential nature of Brahman is, however, pure and perfect, and is not affected by these changes.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita as a philosophy of religion is not a mere metaphysical enquiry into the nature of Brahman as the ground of existence, but is also the spiritual method of attaining Brahman as the goal or supreme end of life. The first four *Vēdānta Sūtras* sum up the wisdom of the *Upaniṣads* by establishing the reality of Brahman as the ultimate reason of the universe and by connecting such knowledge by the *samanvaya* method or method of co-ordination with the supreme value of life consisting in the realization of Brahman. The wisdom of the *Upaniṣads* is the crown of knowledge and not its contradiction and sublation, as it reconciles the logical validity of the physical sciences and the value of moral life with *Brahma-jñāna* and thus gives a new meaning to them. Brahman is *saguṇa* and realizes Himself through His *prakāras* or modes, *acit* and *cit*. The scientist deals with the domain of matter

and explains natural phenomena according to the law of causation and the *Vēdāntin* accounts for the events in nature in terms of *prakṛti* and its *pariṇāmic* changes. *Prakṛti* undergoes essential changes in infinite ways and it is a moving panorama which is like the evershifting changes of the cinema. But these processes of *prakṛti* are not mechanical, but are governed by teleological laws. They form a suitable environment for the progress of the moral self and its perfection. The self is subject to *karma* and undergoes moral expansion and contraction in accordance with the law of retribution and the endless variety of moral experiences accounts for the variations in the birth and status of the migrating *jīva*. Spiritually, the self is eternal, and it is only its *jñāna* that is subject to adventure and has a history. The self can attain freedom only when it regains its religious consciousness and realizes its relation as a *prakāra* of Brahman. The process of nature and the progress of the self can thus be understood only in terms of the inner purpose of Brahman. The universe is a place for making *muktas*. Matter is moulded for the making of souls. Brahman is ever pure and perfect, but it realizes its nature only by entering into matter with the *jīva* for creating the world of *nāma-rūpa* and Brahmanizing the self. The natural cause of *pariṇāma*, the moral cause of *karma* and the cosmic cause of Brahmanization have their ultimate explanation in the concept of *acit*, *cit* and Brahman.

Every school of *Vēdānta* admits the futility of logical and temporal categories to account for the ultimate origin of the world. Time, in the phenomenal sense, has no beginning. When the *Sadvidyā* speaks of the world process, it refers only to a particular event in the series of *sṛṣṭi* and *praḷaya*,

which is really cyclic and not a sudden creation out of nothing. The beginninglessness of the cosmic process is thus a logical mystery. But the *Vēdāntic* schools seek to explain the inexplicable in terms of *māyā*, *upādhis*, *pariṇāma s'akti* and *karma*. While *Māyāvāda* and the schools of *Bhēdābhēda* with their parallels in western thought attribute, in the name of absolutism, the errors, evils and other imperfections of life to the absolute itself, it is the supreme merit of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion that, while it realizes the sacred mystery and the wonders of nature, it traces the imperfections to the finite self alone. Brahman is immanent in the *jīva* as its *antaryāmin*, but is, at the same time, unaffected by the modifications of matter and the imperfections of the self. This view satisfies the metaphysical demand for an all-inclusive unity and the religious quest for the pure and perfect self. It fits in with the grammatical rule of co-ordination or *sāmānādhikaraṇya*, which says that words having different meanings may denote only one thing. A term connoting the effect state of Brahman, including its modal self, connotes also the same Brahman in the causal state. 'The unity of manifestation' is the 'unity of composition' owing to the non-difference of cause and effect and the self-identity of Brahman. Every term or thought that refers to the finite being also connotes the Supreme Being or Logos because it enters along with the individual selves into the world of matter for the evolution of names and forms and the eliciting of the self. The term *s'arīra* connoting the body connotes the *s'arīrin* or the Self which is ultimately Brahman itself. In this way the problem of the *Sadvidyā*, namely, 'what is that by knowing which everything else is known,' is solved satisfactorily. By knowing the cause, the effect is known ; by knowing Brahman, the one without a second, the universe of *cit* and *acit*, which

is its effectuation, is also known. This view bridges the gulf between monism and pluralism, and there is really no self-discrepancy at all as Brahman is eternally existent as the Self of all beings. It also satisfies the quest of the *mumukṣu* for eternal life. *Mukti* or deliverance from *samsāra* would be impossible or undesirable if Brahman is enveloped by illusion or conditioned by *upādhis.* Complete disillusionment or freedom would then be impossible as long as there is an infinity of *avidyā*-ridden or conditioned selves to get *mukti,* and no *mumukṣu* would seek a Brahman infected by *avidyā* or affected by *upādhi.*

Vis'iṣṭādvaita is thus the only philosophy of religion that frees philosophy from agnosticism and religion from dogmatism, and enables the finite self as a seeker after *mukti* to go from *viṣayajñāna* or sense-perception to *Brahmajñāna* or the intuition of *saguṇa* Brahman. The *Vēdāntic* categories or 'ideas' are different from the categories of thought, as categories can be explained only in terms of the self, and they bridge the gulf between phenomenal and noumenal reality. This truth may be explained by giving a *Vēdāntic* meaning to the terms 'absolute,' 'infinite,' 'whole,' 'cause,' 'substance,' and 'subject.' The absolute that is sought to be known by the *nēti* or negative method is not what sublates relational thought, but what resides in it as its prius and presupposition. It gives a meaning to the relative and the relational as its source and transmuting power. Brahman is self-related and is at the same time the Inner Self of finite beings without being affected by their imperfections. The absolute of thought is *Bhagavān*, the God of religion. Brahman is the 'infinite' not in the sense that it is quantitative endlessness or the infinite that is conditioned by the finite, and

is therefore finite, but it is the infinite that dwells in the finite with a view to infinitizing the self (*bṛhattvāt ca brahmaṇatvāt ca*) and giving it the eternal value of *mukti*. Brahman is the 'whole' of existence not in the sense of an aggregate or totality, an identity in difference or an all-inclusive unity, but is the immanent self in all beings and is *pūrṇa* (infinite) and perfect. Brahman is the 'whole' of metaphysics and the 'Holy' of religion. Brahman is the first cause and the final cause of creation. The potential or the enfolded becomes the actual or the unfolded, and this becoming is the inner purpose of soul-making. The cause is ultimately identified with the ground and it means that the form and the function of the self are rooted in the infinite. The self emerges from Brahman and merges into it. The seed of the *jīva* is sown in the womb of matter in order that it may have its fruition in *mukti*. The *Vēdāntic* formula *kāraṇam tu dhyeyaḥ* brings out the truth that Brahman is the all-inclusive whole and the ultimate home of eternal values. It is the ground of the universe of *cit* and *acit* that can be reflected upon as the goal of religious endeavour. Brahman is the substance that exists in itself and by itself, and the world of *acit* and *cit* is modally dependent on it as its *apṛthaksiddhavis'ēṣaṇa* or inseparable attribute. The finite self has adjectival and substantive being and lives and moves and has its being in Vāsudēva, the Self of all beings or *s'arīrin*. The *jīva* as a ray of the supreme light of Brahman is its attribute, but is also a self sustained by Brahman as is different from the abstract determining qualities of Brahman like infinity. From the denotative point of view, the *jīva* is a unique being; but, from the connotative point of view, it refers to Brahman as its ultimate meaning. The *vis'ēṣaṇa* or attribute is a *prakāra* or mode that is inseparably related as *avinābhāva* to the *prakārin* that is the only individual.

Brahman imparts substantiality to the self and makes it one with itself. Finally the term 'subject' connotes the Supreme Self which is the real subject of all knowledge. Consciousness stultifies itself if there is no self as the subject of predication. Brahman is the Inner Self of the subjects and objects of experience. The cosmic Self which thinks in all beings is identical with the inmost self of the *jīva*, and this truth ensures spiritual intimacy between God and the soul. The idea of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* furnishes the key to the meaning of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. This will become more intelligible in the subsequent development of the theme.

The theory that Brahman, the Inner Self of the *jīva*, is the same Brahman as the cosmic Ruler is well brought out by showing the unity of the subject and object philosophy. The philosopher who seeks to know the absolute may start with the self within or the world of nature without. From these two starting points he may be led either to monistic idealism or deism. The former begins with the analysis of the 'I,' while the latter proceeds from a study of the object without. To the *Advaitin* the knowledge of the self is the main theme of metaphysics and it is founded on the psychological analysis of the three states of consciousness or *avasthātraya*. Knowledge is a transition from the external to the internal and from the gross to the subtle, till every rational thought is abolished in the super-conscious state of *samādhi*. It is a transition from the realism of the waking consciousness to the mentalism of the dream state, the presumed non-dual state of dreamless sleep and the *Advaitic* experience of the fourth state or *turīya*. The *Advaitic* method consists in dispelling *avidyā* or negating negation and affirming the ever existent. The self alone is real and self-proved and the object

that is perceived, inferred or intuited is false and fictitious. The furniture of the cosmos is an illusory creation of the self and is non-existent. *Īs'vara* is the illusory highest and He disappears in pure consciousness. The *jīvanmukta* who has realized the 'I' says: "In me all is born, by me all things are sustained and in me all things are dissolved. I am the secondless Brahman." "I am that Brahman which illumines all things, which is truth, knowledge and bliss absolute." This knowledge is at first imparted by the *guru* and is mediate (*parōkṣa*). It then becomes immediate (*aparōkṣa*). The knowledge is really no becoming, but is only a return to being. The chief defect of monistic idealism as a mere metaphysical enquiry is its tendency to subjectivistic quietism. The idealist as *ēka-jīva-vādin* insists on the single self as the absolute 'I' which exists by itself. The philosophy of deism demolishes *Advaita* as atheistic and gives a fresh orientation to *Vēdānta* by stressing the objective side and establishing the supremacy of *Īs'vara* as the extra-cosmic ruler. The object philosophy, as we may call it, turns our attention from the absolute 'I' as pure thought to the absolute 'Thou' as the extra-cosmic ruler. The cosmic Ruler is deistically conceived as the transcendent being that creates the cosmos by a mere fiat of His will. True religion from this standpoint consists in the knowledge that God is omnipotent and that the *jīva* is impotent and in absolute submission to His will by the feeling "Not I, but Thou." The finite will is reduced to nothing and the will of the Almighty alone is absolute. 'If God is, I am not.' While the subject philosophy makes the 'I' the one without a second, the object philosophy makes the cosmic will of the Creator absolute and the will of the creature is reduced to impotence. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* does not favour these extreme views, and it provides both for religious adoration and for mystic

intimacy by its idea of Brahman as the cosmic ruler who is at the same time the *Paramātman* in the *jīvātman*. The *Chāndōgya* text "Thou art That" does not posit the identity of *Īs'vara* and *jīva* by removing their self-contradictions in the light of the principle of *jahat-ajahal lakṣaṇā* according to which the *jīva* and *Īs'vara* become identical by the sublation of the self-contradictions of nescience. It intimates the truth that *Īs'vara*, the cosmic Lord, is the Inner Self of the *jīva* and guarantees the bliss of spiritual communion between the two. The infinite that transcends the stary heavens is the same infinite that is immanent in the finite self. Thus the 'I' of the subject philosophy or the Self that illumines the *jīva* within is the "Thou" that is the *Īs'vara* of the object philosophy. This view frees the subject philosophy from the charges of subjectivism and atheism and the object philosophy from the charges of deism and divine determinism. And it is the philosophy of truth, as it defines Brahman as not only what is, but also what is self-revealing.

The practical *Advaita* of S'aṅkara dealing with *vyāvahārik* reality has some kinship with the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* philosophy of the absolute as *saguṇa* Brahman. S'aṅkara is often greater than his dialectical method. In his practical *Advaita* dealing with moral and spiritual discipline and the meditations on Brahman, he restores the ideas destroyed in his esoteric monism or pure *Advaita*. The same dual standpoint is noticeable in the transition effected by Kant from the Critique of Pure Reason to the Critique of Practical Reason and by Spinoza from the mathematical concept of substance to that of his ethics, dealing with the intellectual love of God. The transition is not a concession to the needs of the ignorant and the empirically minded, but arises from the deepest springs

of moral and religious consciousness. When *mumukṣutva* is emptied of its ethical and spiritual earnestness by *Īs'vara* and His divine glory being analysed away, it becomes a barren concept and has no moving power. S'aṅkara, as a practical idealist and theist, came to destroy the Buddhistic philosophy of negation and agnosticism and to fulfil the faith of religion. S'aṅkara, the devotee of Vāsudēva, who ardently adores Gōvinda in his immortal work '*Bhaja Govinda*' and the commentator of the *Sahasranāma*, who restored many a shrine, notably of Badarinārāyaṇa, and who dedicated himself to world welfare, is greater than S'aṅkara, the relentless dialectician, who dismisses the world as an evil, illusion or dream, and its *Īs'vara* as a God for the deluded mind. *Īs'vara*, the cosmic ruler, who has omniscience and omnipotence is greater than the *jīva* with its nescience and impotence, at least from the *vyāvahārik* point of view. The concept of God or Brahman varies and develops with the spiritual development of the *adhikāri* or the seeker and when the concept is exalted into an intuition of Brahman, Brahman as such is apprehended. But the attempt to define God from the anthropomorphic point of view and state with an air of toleration that it is an accommodation to the mass mind is an unwarranted assumption and defeats the very purpose for which the theory is started. *Vēdānta* speaks with one voice and not with a double voice, and S'aṅkara as a 'man of action' and practical mystic, as *jñāni* and *bhakta*, meditates lovingly on the absolute of the *Upaniṣads* as the God of the *Gītā* or Vāsudēva. Brahman as *sat-cit-ānanda* is and has existence, consciousness and bliss. If it is a negative definition and is a negation of negation, there is no meaning in the *mumukṣu* seeking *mukti*. But Brahman is the highest self or Vāsudēva having the fulness of being and bliss. In S'aṅkara's practical philosophy, there is no direct criticism of

Vis'iṣṭādvāita and if he had been fully aware of its spiritual significance and value, he would probably have been the *Vēdāntic* precursor of Rāmānuja. In Gauḍapāda, the negative logic of the *Mādhyamikas* is more prominent than the positive.[1] If S'aṅkara prefers, in his practical *Vēdānta*, the positive teaching of Bādarāyaṇa to the negative logic of *S'ūnyavāda*, his view is not much different from that of Rāmānuja.

[1] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 465 ; *vide*, also Das Gupta, *Indian Philosophy*, p. 494.

CHAPTER IV

ONTOLOGY I: BRAHMAN AS *ĀDHĀRA*

THE philosophic enquiry into Brahman as the supreme *tattva* or reality is the central theme of *Vēdānta*. The aim of the *Vēdāntin* is the clear and distinct knowledge of *sāguṇa* Brahman with its defining attributes as enshrined in the *Upaniṣads*. *Vēdāntic* philosophy is a comprehensive consideration of all sides of spiritual experience without sacrificing their integrity and exhibiting them in a systematic way as its fundamental truths. The truths of *Vēdānta* are self-valid, impersonal and eternal, and they can be intuited by consciousness when it is freed from the imperfections of *avidyā-karma*. The philosophy of religion makes such intuitions intelligible, and evaluates them in the light of *S'ruti*. The philosopher thinks God's thoughts after Him in the light of revelation. These thoughts consist mainly of the metaphysical, moral and aesthetic qualities, which are the determining qualities of Brahman. Brahman is knowable by relational thought, which is revelatory and not self-contradictory. There is no self-discrepancy in the defining qualities. Metaphysics, morals and aesthetics are inter-related and related to the whole, and they bring out the nature of the First Cause and the Final Cause of all things. Brahman is the whole of reality and the home of all eternal values like truth, goodness and

beauty. *Vēdāntic* metaphysics defines the ontological nature of Brahman as *satyam* (real reality), *jñānam* (self-consciousness) and *anantam* (infinity). Its ethical philosophy predicates goodness or *amalatva* as the moral content of Brahman as *Īs'vara.* Its aesthetics defines Brahman as *sundara* or the beautiful and *ānandamaya* or the blissful. Reality and value are one, and the highest values of life like truth, goodness and beauty are intrinsic and eternal, and are conserved in the absolute Self as its essential nature. The metaphysician meditates on *saguṇa* Brahman as *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantan*[1] as the one ideal of life in which all ideals are self-realized. The moral philosopher seeks sanction for conduct in the purity and righteousness of *Īs'vara.* The aesthetic philosopher is attracted by the beauty of Brahman who is *bhuvana sundara* or the supremely beautiful. Brahman is thus defined as *satyam, jñānam, anantam, amala* and *ānandamaya* and these are His determining qualities (*svarūpa nirūpaka dharma*). Undue emphasis on one aspect to the exclusion of others is unphilosophic. It leads to the errors and evils of intellectualism, voluntarism and emotionalism. They are really co-ordinate values, and do not suffer from the errors of self-contradiction and the evils of subordination. The absolute as *saguṇa* Brahman alone satisfies the demands of metaphysical, moral, and aesthetic consciousness in their entirety and integrity. The logical and philosophical intellect starts with the trustworthiness of thought and ends with the knowledge of Brahman as truth. The logical leads to the alogical and is fulfilled in it. The intuition of Brahman is the consummation of reason. Likewise, the moralist postulates the freedom of the will and seeks its meaning in the goodness of God. The moral leads to the amoral and is fulfilled in it. Goodness is

[1] satyam jñānam anantam Brahma.—*Taitt. Up.*, Ānandavalli, 1.

perfected in the holiness of God. The aesthetician is drawn by physical beauty and feels in the end that such beauty has its meaning only in the transcendental beauty of Brahman.

The *Vēdāntic* study of reality as *tattva* relates not only to the nature of Brahman *per se*, but also to its modal expressions of *cit* and *acit*. It is, however, not directly interested in the bewildering problems presented by cosmology and psychology. The ontological theory of being or reality is governed by the religious need for realizing it, because it is a philosophy of religion, which seeks to know the *tattva* with a view to attaining it as *puruṣārtha* or the aim of life. The metaphysician is also a *mumukṣu* or seeker after salvation, and selects the revelational truths of the *Vēda*, which are relevant to his spiritual need, and specializes in the knowledge of the essentials of *Vēdānta*. *Vēdic* knowledge thus deepens into *Vēdāntic* wisdom. The most essential truth of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* (*sāratamam*) is the concept of Brahman as *sarīrin* and of *cit* and *acit* as His *S'arīrā* or *S'arīrātma-bhāva* (the relationship of body and soul), and it is its differentia. It is the key word of *Vēdānta*, which is therefore called *S'ārīraka S'āstra*, and it is as simple as it is comprehensive. It satisfies the tests of logical consistency, the *Mīmāmsa* rules of *Vēdic* interpretation linguistics and the requirements of ethics and aesthetics, as also the needs of religious consciousness. *S'arīra* is defined by Rāmānuja as a substance, which a sentient soul or self can completely support and control for its own purposes and which stands to the soul in a subordinate relation.[1] The self abides in the absolute, and lives, moves, and has its being in it; it depends on it for its form

[1] yasya cētanasya yad-dravyam sarvātmanā svārthē niyantum dhārayitum ca s'akyam taccēṣataikasvarūpam ca tat tasya s'arīram.—*S.B.*, II. i. 9, p. 15 of Vol. II.

and functioning, and subserves its end. Brahman sustains the *jīva* as its Self and inner ruler, and uses the *jīva* for its satisfaction in the same way in which the *jīva* animates and sustains the body, and uses it for its own satisfaction. This relation is known as that of *ādhāra* and *ādhēya* (the sustainer and the sustained), *niyantā* and *niyāmya* (the controller and the controlled) and *sēṣi* and *sēṣa*[1] (the independent and the dependent), which may be generally called the metaphysical, moral and aesthetic aspects of reality. They can be analysed, but not separated, and the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* philosophy is the synthetic exposition of these foundational truths. Every school of *Vēdānta* points to supra-sensuous and supra-rational knowledge as its ultimate truth, and, in formulating it, has to rely on analogies drawn from sensuous experience. The concept of *s'arīrin* is a fitting analogical explanation of the vital intimacy between *jīvātman* and *Paramātman*, but it is only an analogy. Explanation is the beginning of knowledge and its end, and the full implication of this definition will become clear in the course of the argument. Brahman, the *S'arīrin*, is metaphysically the ground of existents, morally their inner ruler, and aesthetically the beauty and bliss of life. The first basic truth of ontology that calls for explanation is the knowledge of Brahman as *ādhāra* and it is revealed by the *Taittirīya* definition that Brahman is *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*.

The *Upaniṣad* defines Brahman as *saguṇa* and refers to its three ontological predicates of *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*. The *Advaitin*, however, combats this view and declares that the definition is negative and *lakṣaṇā* (figurative) and that it refers to *nirguṇa* Brahman. He employs the principle of

[1] *Vide*, Vēdānta Des'ika, *Rahasyatrayasāra*, Chap. III.

apaccheda and sublation, and argues that, since determination is negation, the *saguṇa* idea is sublated or negated by the *nirguṇa* truth. When two cognitions are conflicting and self-discrepant, what is self-explained sublates what can be accounted for in other ways. *Nirguṇa* is non-dual consciousness which is self-established and *saguṇa* is the consciousness of duality and difference which is relational, and therefore self-contradictory. *Abhēdajñāna* or the knowledge of non-difference thus sublates *bhēdajñāna* (that of difference). The *pramāṇas* are a process of self-criticism based on the theory of non-contradiction and degrees of truth. *S'ruti* is self-valid and has greater authority than the testimony afforded by sense-perception and reasoning, and the *nirguṇa* texts in the *S'ruti* which teach non-difference have greater force than the *saguṇa* texts. They sublate the *saguṇa* ideas which teach duality and distinction. Thus what comes later in the *Vēdāntic* development of truth like *abhēdajñāna* stultifies the earlier and less developed idea. Ultimately, Brahman transcends all degrees and values, and there is nothing that can be subsumed and sublated. The *Taittirīya* definition of Brahman as *satyam*, *jñānaṃ* and *anantam* is negative, and is therefore no definition at all. The term *satyam* denies the temporal and phenomenal nature of Brahman,[1] and affirms the absolute as the *sat* without a second. The term *jñānam* refutes the ultimate reality of matter or *acit* and the term *anantam* negates the limitations of space and time. These three terms are not synonymous, as they controvert the three different states of the empirical and illusive experience of *anṛta*, *jaḍa* and *vicchinna*. But they have, in the light of the linguistic rule of *sāmānādhikaraṇya*, one meaning and only one meaning. The unity of judgment is not a unity

[1] *S'rī Bhāṣya*, I. i. 1, p. 19.

underlying difference or a whole consisting of parts, as unity cannot co-exist with difference. The copula in the judgment "Brahman is *satyam*" implies absolute identity. Bare difference is unthinkable and sterile, and identity in difference as the identity of opposites or distincts is self-contradictory. *S'ruti* is clear that the man who perceives difference suffers from delusion and subjects himself to death. *Advaita*, therefore, declares that pure consciousness alone is real and that it cannot be sublated. *Nirvis'ēṣa cinmātra* or absolute thought is self-established and not sublated, and whatever is *savis'ēṣa* or determinate is sublatable and therefore unreal. It is the purpose of *Vēdāntic* philosophy to refute the dualistic views and destroy nescience. By negating the false, the true is virtually affirmed. *Nirguṇa* Brahman is self-proved and *avidyā* is self-stultified, and the false *jīva* dies a nameless death in the spaceless expanse of eternal and boundless bliss. *Jīvahood* alone disappears; the *jīva* does not die.

Bhēdābhēda joins issue with *Māyavāda* in its exposition of the *Taittirīya* text, and its polemical warfare with *Advaita* is more relentless than the classical criticism of *avidyā* by Rāmānuja known as *saptavidha anupapatti*. *Bhēdābhēda* is as keenly interested in combating the *nirguṇa* theory as in constructing the theory of *saguṇa* Brahman. *Bhēdabhēda* has no sympathy with a dialectic philosophy which mercilessly destroys other theories without any constructive theory of its own, and which, when placed on the horns of a dilemma, takes refuge in the theory of *anirvacanīyatva* which is confessedly no theory at all. Every *vākya* or word has some meaning, and if *māyā* or *avidyā* is *anirvacanīya*, it is neither *bhāva* (existent) nor *abhāva* (non-existent), and it explains nothing. Then there is no *Māyāvāda* or *Advaitic* explanation at all. The *Māyāvādin*

dichotomizes reality firstly into the *s'ākṣin* and the *jīva*, secondly, identity consciousness and cosmic nescience, and thirdly, the transcendental one and the phenomenal many, and this duality ends in an unbridgeable dualism. The first theory slides into subjectivism, the second into pan-illusionism and the third, into agnosticism. The rationalist rejects scriptural authority, *vyāvahārika satya* and the idea of *Īs'vara*, and seeks the knowledge of the 'I' or *prajñāna* or witnessing self. But he lapses into the error of solipsism, the evils of egoism, and the perils of quietism. The illusion theory makes *māyā* envelop Brahman and *Īs'vara*, the first figment of cosmic nescience. A magnified *samsārin* seeking *sarvamukti* then becomes a make-believe. *Māyā* does not predicate falsity to the absolute, nor is it false predication, as the *upādhi* or limiting circumstance is real and not a baseless fabrication. Illusion is a fact of experience, and it is not true that the fact of illusion is an illusion. The phenomenon theory is more realistic, but its view of *Īs'vara* as a conceptual reading of the absolute caught in the contradictions of the subject-object relation does no justice to the autonomy of religious consciousness. The self-contradiction of relational thought infects reality, and the creator becomes the very crown of such contradictions. His omniscience is nescience on a cosmic scale. The only way of avoiding the discrepancies of the contradiction theory is to accept *ajātavāda* and deny philosophy itself or retrace the steps and follow the way of *saguṇa* Brahman. *Bhēdābhēda* accepts the theory of predication as an affirmation of reality. It defines Brahman as a super-personal self with metaphysical, moral and spiritual perfections. Brahman is the unconditioned; but it limits itself by its real *upādhis* and becomes the conditioned. It is the one Being that becomes God and the finite centres. Though cosmologically Brahman becomes the

universe by its limiting adjuncts and *pariṇāma s'akti*, it is spiritually perfect and has the attributes of *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*.

Rāmānuja also repudiates and rejects the *Māyāvāda* view of Brahman as *nirvis'ēṣa cinmātra* or pure consciousness and concludes that Brahman is *saguṇa* and *savis'ēṣa*, having the ontological predicates of *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*. To thought belongs the quality of thought and self-luminosity. There is no self-contradiction in the subject-object consciousness. The relation between the subject and the object is between distincts and not between opposites. The theory of sublation applies only to contradictories and not to distincts. In the spatial and temporal order, each thing has its own distinct position, and there is no contradiction, in the relation between a jar and a piece of cloth.[1] Likewise it is meaningless to say that youth contradicts the manhood of a person in social life. One man Devadatta does not contradict another person Yajñadatta. Distincts become opposites only when they are predicated of the same thing, at the same time, in the same sense. Even the principle of sublation presupposes the distinction between what sublates and what is sublated, and no *jñāna* is known to sublate itself. The real can be known through the real, but never through the unreal. If pure consciousness as *anubhūti* or experience is self-proved, it means that it has the quality of being self-proved, as proof is a relational way of thought. But if it is not proved, it is non-existent like the flower in the sky. Negation is not nothingness, but is significant, and meaning is meaning for a self. Consciousness is thus the attribute of the conscious self. The self is essentially intelligent or *cid-rūpa* and has *caitanya*

[1] *S'rī Bhāṣya*, I, i. 1, p. 30.

or consciousness for its quality, and is not mere being or *nirvis'ēṣa cinmātra* or indeterminate consciousness. Selfhood thus precedes and presupposes the experience of the self. To say that the moment the self knows itself as the 'I,' it is entangled in the not-self and negation enters into its being and contradicts it, is the negation of consciousness itself. Self-knowledge presupposes self-consciousness or awareness in the ordinary way. Self-positing is the positing of the self and there is no oppositing in the process. The 'I' does not pose and oppose itself with a view to reposing in itself. If *ajñāna* or illusion ever gnaws at the root of self-consciousness and changes the self into the non-self, knowledge would be a process of self-deception and not self-revelation. Then *jñāna* and *ajñāna* will produce each other, leading to the fallacy of see-saw and infinite regress, and disillusionment will never be complete, till there is *jīvanmukti* of all the *jīvas* and *Īs'vara-mukti*. *Advaita* will be on safe ground if it trusts *Vēdāntic* authority and follows the way of *saguṇa* Brahman as the logical and intuitional highest, and then it will go hand in hand with *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. Rāmānuja accepts the logic of *Bhēdābhēda* that proves the reality of *saguṇa* Brahman, but condemns its ethics which traces the imperfections of life to the *bhēda* element in Brahman. *Saguṇa* Brahman has *dharmabhūtajñāna*, which is eternal and all-pervasive unlike that of the finite self and is not featureless. Rāmānuja gives a new orientation to *Vēdāntic* thought by insisting on the co-ordination of logical, ethical and aesthetic experiences. Several attributes, which are non-contradictory, may define the same reality by distinguishing it from other objects, and the plurality of these qualities does not mean the plurality of the object defined. Reality is qualified by plurality, but is not itself plural. The qualities co-exist as distincts and as the way

of knowing Brahman. Thus the Infinite shines by itself with its infinite radiations and these radiations enhance the glory of the self-effulgent absolute. *Saguṇa* Brahman has an infinity of perfections of which some are defining qualities (*svarūpa nirūpaka dharma*) and the others are derived from the definition (*nirūpita svarūpaka vis'ēṣaṇa*). Of the five essential attributes of Brahman already mentioned are the metaphysical ideas of *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*. *Amalatva* or holiness is the ethical perfection of Brahman or *Bhagavān*, and *ānanda* brings out His aesthetic nature. The metaphysical qualities will be first considered in their due order.

BRAHMAN AS SATYAM

The definition of Brahman as *satyam*[1] brings out its nature as the absolutely unconditioned reality, and distinguishes it from the conditioned reals of *cit* and *acit*. The philosophy of *acit* or *prakṛti* is explained by the scientific and cosmological law of causation known as the *satkārya vāda* or *pariṇāma vāda*, which affirms the non-difference of cause and effect. This view is opposed to the theories of *asatkārya vāda*, which explains the effect as creation out of nothing; to *vivarta vāda*, which makes it an illusory appearance; and also to the *pariṇāma vāda* of the Sāṅkhya which refers only to the evolution of *prakṛti* and ignores the progress of *puruṣa* and the inner purpose of *Puruṣōttama*. It affirms the truth that the cause was pre-existent and not non-existent, and that the effect brings out the continuity, and does not betray any self-contradiction. What is non-existent cannot become the existent and what exists cannot be unreal. A substance enters

[1] *S'rī Bhāṣya*, I, i. 2, p. 123.

into different states in succession. What passes away is the substance in its previous state or *avasthā* and what comes into being is the same substance in its subsequent state as effect. It is the identical object that changes and the plurality of changes is the outcome of the primal unity of the thing. *Pariṇāma* is a perpetual unfolding of what is enfolded. It is the potential or implicit alone that becomes the actual or explicit. The one physical substance, clay, enters into many states, like pots and pitchers, and is their immanent cause or *upādāna kāraṇa*. The same *prāṇa* has biological variations of form as well as function. The same mind has varied psychic presentations. Devadatta changes from day to day and yet he is identical with himself. Such continuity, which is physical, biological, psychical and historical, does not show any opposition between one state and another. The son does not contradict the mother, manhood does not sublate youth, nor do lovers stultify themselves. Development thus brings out the inner value of the thing and does not suffer from self-discrepancy. *Prakṛti* is subject to the law of *pariṇāmā* and evolves into the ever-changing phenomenal universe. Matter is not merely what is, but what becomes, and is a series of particular perishing presentations. It is a perpetually fleeting flux without any stability. Each object is fugitive, passes over into different states, and each later state is out of connection with the earlier one. Things in the spatial world come and go in quick succession. Events in the temporal order likewise vary and vanish. The body is subject to mobility, metabolism and katabolism. One form of energy is transformed into another, and the psychic process is a stream of momentary modifications, and no thought repeats itself. Thus every phenomenon, physical as well as psychical, is happening by way of cause and effect. It

combines and dissolves again. It happens and then disappears. Thus what is static is dynamic and endless becoming or duration. The wheel of becoming moves without beginning or end and without intermission. But this idea of an ever-changing universe is opposed to the Buddhistic theory of momentariness, wherein there is no stable substance. Change implies self-maintenance and dynamic stability. If everything lasts only for a moment, life would become impossible, and there would be no social order. *Prakṛti* is not pure passivity or non-being, nor is its movement the outcome of the strife of the opposites of pure being and non-being. *Prakṛti* is eternally real, but its primal unity is in constant change and it never stands still. It is the perpetual that changes. The *praḷaya* state is the reverse order of *s'ṛṣṭi* in which each effect is reabsorbed into its immediate cause. *S'ṛṣṭi* and *praḷaya* thus succeed each other in endless cyclic order. In the causal state *sat* is subtle and undifferentiated ; but in the effect state it evolves itself into the infinite variety of *nāma rūpa*. This account is different from the *Brahma-pariṇāma-vāda* of the *Bhēdābhēdavādin*, as, according to the former, Brahman is ever pure and matter alone is mutable.

While *prakṛti* exists for consciousness and not in the medium of consciousness and is therefore *jaḍa*[1] and *parāk*, *ātman* is the self-conscious subject or *pratyak*, and is different from the psycho-physical organism or *s'arīra* consisting of the body, the *indriyas*, *manas* and *prāṇas*, the categories of *prakṛti*. This view is opposed to the materialism of the *Cārvākas*, the vitalism of the *Prāṇaists*, the mentalism of the Buddhists and the idealism of the Monists. The *ātman* is not the aggregate

[1] Vēdānta Dēs'ika, "parata ēva bhāsamānam jaḍam"—*Yatīndramata Dīpikā*, sec. 57.

of physical changes, nor a stream of perishing psychic presentations, nor an element of the absolute, but is an eternal self persevering in its own being. Though the *jīva* is monadic, its *jñāna* is infinite, and all *jīvas* are equal in so far as their nature consists of pure consciousness. The idealistic contention, that matter is congealed or concealed spirit and that mind is a grade caught up in a higher unity that overcomes the antithesis between the two, favours subjectivism. The self is the subject of consciousness and is distinct from the body; but, in the empirical state of *samsāra*, its *jñāna* is obscured and limited by *avidyā-karma*. It falsely identifies itself with the body, becomes *ahankāra* and subjects itself to endless psycho-physical changes, and is caught up in the wheel of *samsāra*. It is subject to the moral law of *karma*, and since virtue is knowledge, it is exalted by good conduct and frees itself from the consciousness of exclusiveness. While the modifications (*pariṇāma*) of matter are changes in its essential nature, the moral experiences of the *jīva* determined by its *karma* affect only its *jñāna* and not the *jīva* which is essentially free. The hazards and hardships of moral adventure have no beginning and cannot be causally accounted for.

Both *acit* and *cit* as the modes of Brahman have their being in Brahman as their ultimate ground, and are sustained by its inner purpose. The *pariṇāmic* changes of *pradhāna* or *prakṛti* are not self-originated, but subserve the divine purpose of soul-making. Matter is moulded for the making of the self. Likewise the moral law of *karma* is governed by the supreme divine end. In *pralaya* or universal dissolution, the *sat* is without a second in the sense that *cit* and *acit*, which are inseparably related to it as its modes, are in a state of non-differentiation. *Sṛṣṭi* is the self-differentiation of the

same *sat* into the universe. The creative act gives content and outward form to the cosmic will. Brahman with *acit* and *cit* as its modes in the subtle or causal state becomes Brahman with *acit* and *cit* in the effect state, for, as has been said before, cause and effect are non-different in the light of the principle of co-ordination. *Natura naturans* becomes *natura naturata*. *Prakṛti* changes on account of *pariṇāma*. The consciousness of the *jīva* changes on account of *karma*, and Brahman wills the many and becomes the manifold, without being affected by these changes. The inner purpose of cosmic creation is the making of *muktas*. *Prakṛti* serves as the environment for the evolving self and *Brahma sṛṣṭi* or God's creation is for Brahmanizing the self. The universe of *acit* and *cit* has its unity only in Brahman.

The definition of Brahman as the true of the true or *satyasya satyam* brings to light the full implication of the idea of Brahman as *satyam*. While *acit* is termed *asat* and the *jīva*, *sat*, Brahman is known as the true of the true. Reality is not opposed to existence, and the distinctions in reality are due to the relative values of the reals. *Acit* is a fleeting flux, and, as it is a perishing thing passing over into different states, it is, pragmatically speaking, *asatya* or non-existent. The self is eternal, though its self-consciousness undergoes contraction and expansion according to *karma*. Its essential nature does not contract or expand, and it is therefore called *satya*. It is not changed by the evolutionary process of *prakṛti*. Brahman is real reality and the true of the true[1], as it is free from the mutations of matter and the contractions of *karma*.[2] As it is the most real, it is also the most spiritual. *Prakṛti* exists, but its being is identical

[1] *S'rī Bhāṣya*, III. ii. 21.
[2] *Ibid.*, I. i. 1, p. 92.

with becoming and has no ultimate value. The self abides in its being with its essential self-consciousness. But, in the empirical state, its consciousness is limited by the free causality of *karma*. Brahman is ever perfect and supremely true as distinguished from the processes of *prakṛti* and the progressing self with its infinite hazards in the realm of *karma*. The negative definition of Brahman in the *Upaniṣad* by the *nēti* method does not deny the finite, but denies only the finitude of Brahman. Brahman is beyond the perishable and the imperishable. Thus *cit*, *acit* and *Īsvara* have their own reality and value. The monist confuses distincts with opposites. The distincts may co-exist without any contradiction. The different states of the same substance at different times do not betray any self-discrepancy. They are not false (*mithyā*) or futile (*tuccha*). *Sat* is the absolute or the unconditioned one without a second, and is the supreme self unaffected by falsity or error and untainted by falsehood or evil. When the non-differentiated enters into the finite and becomes self-differentiated, it does not expose itself to the perils of the contradiction between being and becoming, or reality and existence. Every cause is a because, and the world is real because it is rooted in Brahman and is sustained by it as its eternal self; and the supreme end of the self-determination of Brahman is the moulding of the self. When the empirical self is freed from *avidyā* or *karma*, it knows its non-difference from Brahman and realizes the being of its being. The manifold distinctions of *jīvas* into gods, men and animals are traceable to *avidyā-karma* and when the feeling of distinction is destroyed in *mukti*, the *jīva* attains the nature of Brahman or *madbhāva* and has the essential nature of intelligence. The being of being (*tadbhāva-bhāva*) is attained not by the self-stultification of *avidyā*, but by the spiritual transformation of the empirical self into the essential

self. The predicate of omnipresence should be construed pantheistically in terms of immanence and the divineness of reality. The universe of *cit* and *acit* lives, moves and has its being in Brahman, and derives its form and function from its omnipenetrativeness. Just as the self pervades the body, Brahman vivifies the universe as the life of its life. Though Brahman is in space, it is not space or spatialized, or limited to a particular locality.

BRAHMAN AS JÑĀNAM

Brahman is the *sat* without a second, the self-existent and self-contained substance that is self-caused, and, at the same time, the creative source or unity that differentiates itself into thinking things and objects of thought, and realizes itself in its infinite determinations. Substance as *sat* is not the negation of determination, but is its affirmation and the explanation of the diversity of life. The substantive is immanent in its adjectives. Whatever is is in Brahman which is its truth and explanation. Being and consciousness are not one, and Brahman as *jñāna* transforms the idea of *sat* or substance with differentiation into the self-conscious subject with self-differentiation. It has infinite consciousness which is unlike the *jñāna* of the *jīva*, and is never limited by *karma*. One who knows Brahman becomes Brahmanlike and realizes its infinite intelligence or consciousness. The *Vēdāntin* is not merely interested in apprehending the existence of Brahman, but also in comprehending its nature. It is not knowledge about Brahman in an external way but the integral knowledge of Brahman as the ultimate subject of experience. The supreme subject is self-luminous and does not depend for its light on any outside object; and is therefore defined as

jyōtiṣām jyōtiḥ or the light of lights[1] that illumines the stars above and the self within. By the light of Brahman all this is lighted. There the sun does not shine, nor the moon, nor the stars.[2] The self is distinct from its consciousness just as light is from its luminosity, and illumines itself and its objects. The self shines by itself as *pratyak* or self-consciousness ; but its consciousness is not in itself, but exists for the self, and is therefore called *parāk*. Brahman thinks in the self and as the self and is called not only the eternal of eternals, but the thinker of thinkers. The absolute is self-realized and self-subsistent, and it is above relations, and yet it includes them.

Consciousness shines forth through its own being to its own substrate at the moment of experience.[3] Pure consciousness as such without a self is non-existent like the son of a barren woman, and is undefinable. If it is self-proved, it means that it is the proof of some truth to some one. Thought presupposes distinction and difference and demands their ground or underlying unity. If there is no diversity, the intellect would, as Bradley remarks, invent it. The identity philosopher not only insists on the denial of difference and distinction, but also on the affirmation of absolute identity or pure consciousness that transcends or stultifies the subject-object relation. But identity is not bare existence, and the view of Brahman as Being or the highest generalization of existence is the result of regressive abstraction. Existence

[1] tacchubhram jyōtiṣām jyōtiḥ,—*Muṇḍ. Up.*, II. ii. 9.

[2] na tatra sūryō bhāti na candra-tārakam nēmā vidyutō bhānti kutōyam agniḥ tamēva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam tasya bhāsā sarvam idam vibhāti. —*Kaṭh. Up.*, II. v. 15 and *Muṇḍ. Up.*, II. ii. 10.

[3] anubhūtitvam nāma vartamāna das'āyam svasattayā ēva svās'rayam pratiprakās'amānatvam. *S. B.*, I. i. 1, p. 31.

without content and character is inconceivable and self-contradictory. Absolute consciousness without the self is equally unthinkable. *Brahma-jñāna* or self-knowledge is the knowledge of the self as the absolute. The self is affirmed even in denying it, and, if consciousness remains self-identical when *jñāna* sublates *ajñāna* and sublates itself, it is equally true that the self cannot sublate itself. The dialectic that destroys the self also destroys consciousness and leads to scepticism. Self-hood presupposes and precedes self-consciousness, and the absolute is not 'a self-absorbing sponge which sucks in its own selfhood' and destroys it, but is the self-conscious being that is above relational thought and knows it is above it.

Brahman is eternally self-realized, is above relations and yet includes them as their pervading identity or self. Identity has different meanings: it may be bare identity lapsing into nothingness; or it may be the systematic unity of selves or elements based on identity in difference of the *Bhēdābhēda* or Hegelian variety, which is self-contradictory. It may also be numerical identity, which is a mechanical whole of parts or qualitative sameness which is only partial identity. Finally it may be personal identity based on recognition. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* view of Brahman as the self is contra-distinguished from all these views. If self-consciousness is an inner defect of thought which veils reality, it can *ex hypothese* never reveal it, and, if the self is destroyed in the process of discovering itself, there is no *mumukṣutva* or desire for deliverance, or *mōkṣa* or deliverance. There is no passage from the philosophy of nescience to that of identity-consciousness. The view that thought collides with reality offers no scope for escaping from its self-contradictions; and there is no

spiritual hope of freedom from its imperfections. Identity in difference is an original confusion infecting systematic unity, and there is no way of ending the confusion. Hegel who aims at fusion is also regarded as the prince of confusionists. Discord and division cannot be transcended by the reblending of the material. The theory of numerical identity, which says that Brahman is the whole of *cit*, *acit* and *Īśvara*, is equally inadmissible, as no *mumukṣu* is known to adore a whole consisting of many parts. Mere togetherness, as in the case of tri-coloured cloth, is only an external relation and does not bring out the real conjunction or identity, which is the inner ground of content. Personal identity is, no doubt, a fact of recognition, as it recognizes self-sameness and continuity; but the self is not a construction nor a creature, but is eternal and self-realized, and its existence does not require mere psychological proof. The idea of Brahman as the ever-effulgent Self is free from the defects inherent in the other theories and is the true subject of the *Upaniṣadic* enquiry. The Self cannot exist without content or character. As the absolute, it is above relational thought and is at the same time the ground of thought. Brahman is conscious and has consciousness (*cit* and *caitanya*), and the two can be philosophically analysed, but cannot be really separated. The Self without self-consciousness is as inconceivable as self-consciousness without the self. The Self has *dharmabhūtajñāna* or attributive consciousness as its *sine qua non*. "Consciousness is either proved or not proved. If it is proved, it follows that it possesses attributes; if it is not, it is something absolutely nugatory, like a sky flower!" Consciousness is the attribute of a permanent conscious self.[1] 'In the judgment 'I know,' the thinker is different from the thought and the *dharmin* and

[1] *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 55.

the *dharma* are inseparable like light and its luminosity.[1] Where the self is, its consciousness is and there is agreement in presence. Where the self is not, there consciousness is not, and there is agreement in absence; but the negative test is really inapplicable, as the absence is not real. The self is the whole only in the sense that it is self-complete, and *jñāna* is its self-explanation. *Jñāna* cannot exist without the self as its ground, and the self cannot exist without *jñāna* to reveal it. Brahman is self-realized and *jñāna* is revelatory, and the attribute enriches the self and does not impoverish or attenuate it. The finite self has, like Brahman, self-consciousness; but it is contracted by *karma* and is mutable, finite and imperfect in the empirical state of *samsāra*, though it is really self-effulgent. *Jñāna* is the differentia of the self, though it has infinite self-expressions in the divine nature and modifications in the finite self. In both cases knowledge is of reality and not reality itself.

Dialectical monism is oppressed by a sense of self-contradiction infecting the very centre of Brahman and obscuring its nature. According to it, thought in all its levels is self-discrepant and cannot know reality. The moment Brahman or pure being thinks and wills to be the many, negation enters into it, and it is caught up in the self-contradiction of the subject-object relation. The knower cannot be known, as it transcends thought; but, when it becomes the known, it is infected by *māyā* or *avidyā*, and is the non-self or the object. Whether *Īs'vara* is the illusory highest, the first figment of cosmic nescience, or the conceptual highest made in the moulds of logic or the aggregate of *avidyā*-made *jīvas*, He is ' subject-object, one-many, being-becoming

[1] *S. B.*, I. i. 1, p. 34.

or the light affirmed in and through darkness.' His omniscience is nescience on a cosmic scale. When once *Īs'vara* lapses from the absolute and is objectified by illusion, He falls by degrees from the summit of being, loses His *Īs'varatva* and becomes *ēka-jīva* or the finite self. At first *Īs'vara* exists conjoined with *māyā*, then becomes its creation and reflection, then an aggregate of individuated phantoms and finally becomes the *avidyā*-ridden *jīva* itself. As being-non-being, He is absolute-relative, and mediates or wavers between Brahman and non-self, and is finally rejected as useless. In the history of *Vēdāntic* warfare between opposing systems, there is action and reaction, and while the uncompromising *Advaitin*, who seeks his inner 'I' as the only reality, avails himself of the dialectics of Nāgārjuna and Bradley to demolish *Īs'vara*, the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitins*, especially of the post-Rāmānuja period, ally themselves with the logicians and the theists in demolishing the subjectivism and nihilism of *Advaitic* thought. *Vēdānta* is not a dialectic that traces the process of self-deception, but is a *dars'ana* interested in the progress of self-realization. The absolute is the self of all beings, *cit* as well as *acit*, as it is the highest and most real, and is not riddled with the self-contradictions of the subject-object relation. The knowing self is different from the known object, and is not opposed, confronted or externalized by it. The subject is never objectified by the negative element of *avidyā* and robbed of its reality. If the logic of *adhyāsa* or false appearance is accepted, *ajñāna* infects *jñāna*, the *jīva* is a figment, *mumukṣutva*, a mockery and *mukti*, a make-believe. There is no transition from the unreal to the real. What is called the non-self or *anātman* is not self-opposition feigning bare negation, but is a positive entity. When a *mukta* knows Brahman, communicates his *jñāna* to another *ātman*, and is aware of the world of

space-time, he does not, by the fact of that knowledge, become *anātman* or *jaḍa*. Non-self is not a negative term, but has a positive meaning. The physical object is, out there, and it exists for the evolving self. It is the object in relation to the subject, which is a centre of experience without the opposition of the self or the non-self. Inter-subjective intercourse would become impossible if the other selves were *anātman* on the ground that what is known is *jaḍa*. If the self is defined as personality, Brahman is more than personal, as it is free from the limitations of *prakṛti* and *karma*, but is not impersonal. If *Advaita* identifies Brahman with *sat* and not *sattā* or bare being, then it defines Brahman as an entity and is not very different from *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*.

The term *ātman* has a specific spiritual meaning, which is not conveyed by the western concepts of spirit, self or soul. When it connotes the finite self or *ātman*, it refers to it as the eternal, essential self intuited in *ātmajñana* and different from the empirical 'me' or the bodily self of *ahankāra*. The reality of inter-subjective intercourse and social life is affirmed even by the *nānā-jīva-vāda* or the theory of 'many selves' of *Advaita* and by the fact of transmission of *Brahmajñāna* to the disciple. Otherness is not hostile to the self, nor is the world process the othering of *Īs'vara* due to His being confronted by the not-self or *anātman*. The *ātman* is distinguishable not from Brahman but within Brahman, and it is not shut in by a wall of externality or exclusiveness.

The true meaning of Brahman as *Paramātman* can now be brought out in the light of *s'ruti*, *yukti* and *anubhava* (revelation, reasoning and experience). The *Paramātman* is the all-self or Vāsudeva that pervades all beings as their inner self

or reason, and the *s'āstraic* intuition that He is the universe does not equate the two as a pantheistic identity of the pervading self and the pervaded object. Brahman is in the world, but not the world. To the *Brahmajñāni*, Brahman alone is real, and the world viewed apart from Brahman is unreal and worthless. The absolute exists in the finite centres of experience as their ground and ultimate meaning. Brahman is not the substrate (*ās'raya* or *adhiṣṭāna*) of nescience, but is the ultimate subject of experience in its individual and social aspects. To the spiritual philosopher interested in *ātmajñāna* or *kaivalya*, the *ātman* is also a self different from *prakṛti*, and persists in all states of consciousness, including *mukti*. Even in deep sleep, it shines in its own light as *s'ākṣin* or seer with its *jñāna* only, but without objective consciousness. The *aham* consciousness is different from *ahankāra* or the bodily feeling arising from *avidyā-karma* that accounts for the contingencies of birth and status. In *viṣayajñāna*, the attributive consciousness contacts the external object, and it results in the awareness of the external object. *Jñāna* is thus substantive and adjectival, whether it is *Brahmajñāna*, *ātmajñāna* or *viṣayajñāna* or God-consciousness, self-consciousness or world-consciousness, and this knowledge enhances the value of *Vēdāntic* life. If reality is *Brahma-māyā*, it is infected by all-enveloping darkness, and everything would be jugglery or make-believe. But if reality is *Brahmamaya*, everything is pervaded by Brahman as its inner self and throbs with its life and light. Brahman is the thinker that thinks in the self and as the self, with a view to imparting *Brahmabhāva* to it and perfecting it.

The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* theory of *Brahmajñāna* is neither realistic nor idealistic, but is the criticism of both these

theories and their completion. The realist, who insists on the priority and primacy of matter and traces consciousness and self-consciousness to *mūlaprakṛti*, becomes materialist. Idealism is at the opposite pole to realism, as it explains the external world as a mental construction. All schools of idealism including subjective idealism, mentalism, objective idealism and absolutism are only refined variations of subjectivism. If the object-philosophy makes *prakṛti* or nature the whole of reality and leads to pan-materialism, the subject-philosophy makes the 'I' the sole reality, and leads to super-solipsism. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* reconciles these extremes by recognizing the equal reality of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* as the expressions of the all-self, and evaluating them in the light of religious consciousness. Matter exists for the evolving self, and the self has its being in Brahman and has supreme value. Subject and object are externally related, but they are not external to Brahman who is their in-dwelling self. There is difference in denotation and identity in connotation, and all thinking beings and objects of thought connote Brahman as their ultimate meaning and truth. In other words, *cit*, *acit* and Brahman denote different entities; but from the point of view of content, *cit* and *acit* ultimately connote Brahman, as it is their self. The omniscience of Brahman as a metaphysical predicate connotes the eternally all-pervasive character of its *jñāna* in the universal and the particular aspect. Human knowledge is finite and fragmentary, and offers no analogy to the all-knowing character of Brahman. But when the discursive intellect is perfected, it expands into the intuitive knowledge of reality, and the self freed from the contraction of *karma*, has cosmic consciousness, and sees everything with the eye of Brahman. Brahman has the character of infinity or *anantatva* as a determinate

quality, which distinguishes it from *prakṛti* and the finite self. Brahman is free from all the limitations of space, time and causality, and this view excludes the perishing *prakṛti* full of changes, the finite self implicated in *prakṛti* and subject to the adventures of *karma* and the freed selves whose nature is not unsurpassable. Infinity belongs to the essential nature of Brahman or its *svarūpa*[1] and to its *jñāna* (perfection) and spiritual form.[2] The *Upaniṣad* defines it as higher than the high and as indestructible, and excludes the elements in their subtle condition. Brahman is also different from Hiraṇyagarbha, *samaṣṭi puruṣa* or the aggregate of finite souls known as *jīva ghana* and is free from all imperfections, which are attributable only to the empirical self. It is formless, as embodiedness arises from subjection to *karma*. Though it abides in all beings, it is not soiled or sullied by their changes and imperfections. The theory of two Brahmans involving the affirmation of *saguṇa* Brahman and its later denial is opposed to logic and life, as truth is one and does not admit of ambiguity and compromise. The negative method of *nēti*, *nēti* does not deny the finite, but denies the finitude of the infinite. The *Vēdāntin* thus concludes that there is no being higher than the highest Brahman, and it is the Supreme Self that is the goal of experience.

The term "infinite" has different meanings in philosophy, giving rise to ambiguity and misconception. If it is the not finite, it is non-existent. If the infinite is what is not finite, it is bounded by the finite and therefore finite. If the infinite implies endless series without a last term like infinite space, time and number, it is indefinite and has no meaning. It

[1] anantapadam des'akāla vastu paricc ēdarahitam svarūpam āha I
saguṇatvāt svarūpasya svarūpēṇa guṇais'ca ānantyam. II
—*S. B.*, I. i. 2, p. 123.

[2] *Yatīndramata Dīpika*. Sec. 127.

is an empty generalization arrived at by abstracting them from their concrete content. An infinity of self-repeating units is emptied of living contact with intelligence, and is cut loose from reality. When the intellect is spatialized, it dissects the tree of knowledge into lifeless sections, and delights in counting the leaves. Another view of the finite is that it betrays self-contradiction, and points beyond itself. The finite is itself and not its opposite. It excludes the other, and is yet invaded by it. It exists through its other, and it is the understanding that treats being as such and non-being as such as absolute and self-contradictory. But the opposites are absorbed by the inner dialectic of thought in a higher unity, and then it is the identity of opposites. The absolute is self-complete and all-inclusive, and transcends the contradictions of relational experience by the reblending of material. Still another view of the infinite is that relational thought with its categories is deceptive and illusory, and the infinite stultifies thought or dual consciousness and remains identical with itself as pure consciousness without any content. Every category is, according to it, infected by *avidyā* and is *ābhāsa* or illusory. *Cinmātra* or pure thought without the opposition of self and non-self alone is real and non-sublatable, and the *nēti* method is said to deny dual consciousness. When the false is denied, the true remains as a self-identity.

The term 'infinite' in the philosophy of religion corrects the tendency of thought to abstract itself from the thinking process or the pulsation of intelligence and gives a positive meaning to the infinite as actual and determinate. This meaning is defined by the idea of "inner plan and purpose" for which it is employed. The infinite may be the perceptual, the conceptual or the intuitional. The infinite of space-time is called the

quantitative infinite. In the negative sense, it is endlessness and indefiniteness. The endlessness of an infinite series is a mathematical abstraction and is philosophically said to be worthless. Since the infinite is defined as the unconditioned, the quantitative infinite is condemned as a contradiction in terms. But the infinity of space-time has a positive meaning. As mere parts of a series, they may exist externally in conjunction; but as parts of a whole, they reveal a plan and a purpose. The particulars given in sense-perception may be disconnected and cause an endless fission. This is due to the sundering of reality into abstract units and the ignoring of the inner unity. What are called infinitely small and infinitely big are still concepts referring to space, time or number. Space is a totality and is real; time is a real process and is not an appearance, and the infinity of space-time is an ordered and orderly plan of creation, whose purpose is to arouse the sense of sublimity and wonder, and it has its own value in the religious consciousness. Scientific imagination is overwhelmed by the immensity of the cosmos with its vast stretch of space extending beyond the starry heavens and the Milky Way and by the immense sweep of time and the idea that the relation between a point on the black board and the known universe is the ratio between the known and the unknown universe crushes the conceit of man and inspires humility and reverence. This is strengthened by the *purāṇic* theory of endless *brahmas* and their age in terms of æons and *yugas*. The cosmic consciousness of Arjuna brings out the spiritual significance of the infinity of space-time as a partial expression of the wonderful *māyā* of *Īsvara*. The infinite of the mathematician and the philosopher is a concept, and is therefore determinate and not endless. The endlessness of an infinite series results from abstraction.

Infinite number is yet number and its succession is governed by that central idea. Bare thought may refer to endless ideal possibilities. But the true infinite excludes bare possibility, and the possible is the real positive concept. The barely possible may be logically valid, but really it may be void. When it is said that the finite world is a self-limitation of the infinite, it means that the infinite excludes mere possibilities as abstractions. Thought is not thought till its posssibility is realized as an inner purpose.

The infinite as *anantam* is ultimately the quality of the absolute as a single experience. It excludes bare possibility and is determinate. Experience presupposes the experiencing self. The self remains the self even in transcending its selfhood, and it is above distinction and not below it. Even if the absolute absorbs the many, it should, as Royce remarks, be aware of this absorption. It should have the quality of transcending many-ness. When I reflect that I know that I know and so on, the process is not liable to the fallacy of endlessness, as knowledge presupposes the self having that knowledge. There can never be a thought without a thinker thinking it. Thought reveals reality and has no lying nature, and it can find itself only in the self which it reveals. The absolute is the unconditioned and perfect, and is the supreme self or the 'individual of individuals.' It is beyond the passing shows of *prakṛti*, the fleeting flux of time and the endless chain of causation. Brahman is in the phenomenal world of space-time, but exceeds their content. The empirical self subjects itself to the *samsāric* series of births and deaths, and has not the purity and perfection of the transcendent self, which is higher than the highest. The true meaning of the infinite is the eternally unconditioned and perfect Brahman, which is beyond the phenomenal changes of

prakṛti and the imperfections of the empirical self and the finite nature of the freed self. The three determining qualities of Brahman, namely, *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*, differentiate Brahman from *acit* and *cit*. The first excludes the ever-changing world of *prakṛti* and the evolving *jīva*; the second, the *muktas* whose *jñana* was once imperfect, and the third, the eternally free *jīvas* or *nitya-muktas* who have no cosmic control. Reality as Brahman has the quality of truth which is the True of the true; of self-consciousness which is ever self-effulgent as the Light of lights and of infinity as the Creator of creators and the Eternal of eternals. The idea of Brahman as the *ādhāra* of *cit-acit* is the life-blood of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. It affirms the reality of the separate elements but denies their separate reality and offers the mystic assurance that every *jīva* lives, moves and has its being in the All-Self or Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER V

ONTOLOGY II: BRAHMAN AS *NIYANTĀ*

THE metaphysical relation between Brahman and the universe of *cit* and *acit* in terms of *ādhāra* and *ādhēya* can now be formulated clearly and distinctly. While western absolutists define reality as the all-comprehensive unity, the ultimate and the universal, they are not clear about the exact relation between the philosophy of nature, the self and their ontological significance. But the *Vēdāntic* view of *prakṛti* with its evolutionary changes, of *ātman* as the eternal self subjecting itself to the moral law of *karma*, and of Brahman as the ground of all thinking beings and objects of thought, has more speculative accuracy and spiritual value than the 'one' of Plotinus, the 'substance' of Spinoza, the 'absolute idea' of Fichte and the 'neutrum' of Schelling. The *Vēdāntic* schools that refer to the universe as an appearance or aberration of reality or to the transformation of Brahman cannot escape the perils of acosmism and pan-cosmism. But the *Visiṣṭādvaita* idea of Brahman as *ādhāra*, with the ontological predicates of *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*, has the merit of being philosophically satisfactory and spiritually satisfying. Reality and value cannot be separated, and this is clearly brought out by the further explanation of Brahman as *satyasya satyam*[1] and *jyōtiṣām jyōtiḥ*[2]. The term *satyasya satyam*

[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, II. i. 20 and II. iii. 6.

[2] *Bṛ. Up.*, IV. iv. 16.

refers to Brahman as real reality as well as the true of the true. It is the source and sustenance of finite existents as their pervading unity and imparts substantiality to them. The *sat* has also supreme value, and, while *acit* exists and *cit* is real, Brahman is their supreme goal or value. The predicate *jyōtisām jyōtiḥ* defines Brahman as the limitless light that illumines the physical luminaries of suns and stars and is the supreme inner light of the individual self. The *sat* as substance or real reality is also the ultimate subject of knowledge. Brahman as the all-self is the prius and presupposition of all thinking beings and objects of thought. The finite self has its own being, but its consciousness coalesces with that of the absolute. There is inclusion only of content and not of extent. The object exists for the subject and is not in it, and both connote the absolute as their ultimate meaning. Brahman is the subject of subjects, and it is in the finite self with a view to imparting its being or *brahmabhāva* to it. Brahman is *anantam* or the eternal of eternals. The infinite is the unconditioned and perfect, and, while it is in the finite, it transcends its limitation. Brahman is the life of our life, and it pours its life into the finite to infinitize its content and to impart eternal value to it.

The metaphysical idea of Brahman as *ādhāra* is to be reinterpreted in terms of Brahman as *niyantā*. Philosophy takes a false step when it contrasts the 'pure reason' of metaphysics with the 'practical reason' of moral philosophy and explains experience as riddled with antinomies and self-contradictions. The 'noumenon' of Kant becomes the 'unknowable' of Herbert Spencer and the 'absolute beyond all appearances' of Bradley. If reality is a thing in itself, it is unknowable, and relational thought becomes a riddle and is

barren and futile. The absolutism of the rationalist thus leads to a blind alley and lands one in agnosticism and scepticism. The modern Indian absolutist goes a step further when he employs the method of Hume and Bradley and Nāgārjuna and explains the religious consciousness as a dogma and defect of thought. To the speculative idealist, God is confronted by the contradictions of being-becoming, lapses into the finite and finally disappears as a figment of nescience. But philosophical idealism often starts with the subject and ends with subjectivism. The identity philosopher uses the mathematical logic of equation, and, since conclusion and premises are identical, his reality is moveless and contentless and affords no scope for speculative enquiry or spiritual quest. If dialectic is employed to dissect theism and thought and lay bare their self-discrepancy, it is self-destructive and has a benumbing effect. Analytic thinking has a tendency to abolish the process of thinking itself and the absolute beyond thought may become decapitated and bloodless and lapse into the unconscious. Philosophy should, therefore, retrace its steps, avoid the pitfalls of mere speculative thinking and scepticism, and accept the trustworthiness of thought and the adequacy of the religious consciousness. To reinterpret Buddhistic negation in the light of *Vēdāntic* affirmation may be desirable; but to misinterpret *Vēdāntic* theism by an alliance with Buddhistic nihilism is to doubt and destroy the foundations of spirituality and paralyse the integrity of philosophy itself. By abolishing *saguṇa* Brahman, Brahman itself is abolished. In a true philosophy which is the philosophy of religion, the absolute of metaphysics is the *Īs'vara* of religion. The pure reason of metaphysics has to ally itself with the practical reason of moral consciousness and become the philosophy of spiritual activism. Consciousness is essentially

conative and purposive. It is more an act of the will than a fact of knowledge, and Kant thinks that 'practical reason' has primacy over 'pure reason.' Reality is rooted in ethical experience, and it is ethical religion that takes us to the heart of reality. It gives a new meaning to Brahman by predicating the quality of *niyantṛtva* to the inner ruler of all beings, who is absolutely pure and holy. *Visiṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of spiritual activism defines Brahman as *Īsvara* who has *apahatapāpmatva* or purity and holiness as His essential quality.

The idea of *Īsvara* as *niyantā* is developed by a criticism and reconstruction of the theories of *dharma* and *niyōga* as held by the *Vēdavādin* and expounded by the *Mīmāmsaka*. *Karma mīmāmsa* whose central aim is the elucidation of the meaning of *Vēdic dharma* or duty is the metaphysic of morals. It is different from economics dealing with *artha* or the goods of earthly life and psychological hedonism which makes egoistic pleasure the end of conduct. *Dharma* is a supersensuous law of conduct or *karma* which can be established only by *Vēdic pramāṇa* or the authority of the *Vēdas.* The *Vēda* is eternal and infallible and is the only sanction for the performance of *dharma.* The conception of *dharma* has its seat *a priori* only in the *Vēda.* The *Vēda* aims at some practical end to be attained by the will, and is not interested in conveying a knowledge of an accomplished thing.[1] Every fact of consciousness is conative whether it is sensory-motor or idea-motor, and it arises only as a response to a practical situation. Doing is thus prior to knowing and has primacy over it. Every sentence, *Vēdic* or non-*Vēdic*, is an imperative, and even affirmative sentences are only imperatives in

[1] *S.B.*, I. i. 1. p. 107 (Ananda Press Edn.) and *S.B.E.*, Vol XLVIII, p. 149.

disguise. The affirmative proposition 'The sun shines in the east' really means 'Look at the sun shining in the east.' When a man mistakes the rope for the snake and is seized with fear, the fear is dispelled not by mere knowledge, but by the conative activity involved in actual perception. Disillusionment is practical owing to the perception of the motionless state of the rope, and it means 'Do not be afraid as it is only a rope and not a snake.' The important element in *karma* is the endeavour to achieve something and is not the end itself, and the *Vēdic* ideal of *karma* lies not in the *phala* or the satisfaction of a desire, but in the moral law of *dharma* as a duty to be done. It is *kāryatā jñāna* or the knowledge of what ought to be done, which instils the sense of duty, the will to do it and the overt act. *Dharma* is thus not a means to an end, but is the end itself, and it is a *Vēdic* imperative of the form 'Do it' and is therefore unconditional and absolute. The only motive for the *Vēdic* 'ought' is the moral feeling of reverence for the law.

'Ought' implies 'can' and the *Mīmāmsaka* insists on the freedom of the self as the essential truth of the moral consciousness. The very term *s'āstra* means a command, which is freely obeyed by the *ātman*. The moral law is addressed to the free self, and the object of moral freedom is not the realization of *ātman* or Brahman, as activity is more valuable than self-awareness. The performance of duty as a *Vēdic* injunction is the only aim of life and not the *Vēdāntic* view of *apavarga* or *mokṣa*. *Karma* is of three kinds, *viz.*, *niṣiddha* or *pratiṣiddha* or what is forbidden by the *Vēda*, *kāmya* or what is connected with a wish to be fulfilled and *nitya* or what is compulsorily prescribed. The performance of *yāga* or sacrifice is

kāmya karma and is a conditional imperative ; it is a means to a desired end ; but *nitya karma* like *sandhyāvandana* is a categorical imperative and an end in itself. The obligation is unconditional and absolute, and does not admit of exceptions. The system of *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* is thus rooted in the moral law of *karma* and the reign of *dharma*. The *Vēda* is self-posited and eternally existent. It is not the utterance of God as the creator of the universe, but is God or Brahman in the form of *s'abda*. The *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* does not need a beneficent personal God as the creator who distributes rewards, though it posits a polytheistic world of *Dēvas*. The term ' Dēvas ' refers only to names. If *Īs'vara* created the world, He is limited by its imperfections and ceases to be omnipotent. If *Īs'vara* is, however, all-powerful, *dharma* will be dethroned by the arbitrary fiat of the divine will. The *Mīmāmsaka* therefore concludes that *karma* alone is Brahman, and regards God as a superfluity to be dispensed with. Even *ātmavidyā* which states that the *ātman* should be known that it is so, is only an *artha-vāda* and is subordinated to the law of duty. Royal philosophers like As'vapati Kēkaya and Janaka preferred the way of *dharma* to the wisdom of *ātmajñāna*.[1]

The right, as conformity to law, cannot, however, be separated from the good as an end to be attained. Every act has its own result. The end of good conduct is the attainment of pleasure here or in *svarga* and the avoidance of pain. Every act of *karma* leaves a moral effect which cannot always be physically perceived, and it generates a new super-sensuous force called *apūrva* or *niyōga* in the agent or action, which is a mediating link between the act and its fruition. If a man, for example, performs the *jyōtiṣṭōma* sacrifice, the act creates

[1] *S.B.*, III, iv. 3 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 688.

an unseen super-sensuous potency in him. which will in the future lead to beneficial sensible results, and duty is crowned with happiness in *svarga*.[1] It is *apūrva* or the unseen force that distributes rewards and apportions pleasure and pain to the agent in accordance with his *karma*. Owing to the plurality of effects, there should be a corresponding plurality of causes, and it is not therefore justifiable to trace them to a single supreme cause called *Īs'vara*. Each cause remains as a potency which leads to the attainment of its result, and *apūrva* is the one eternal potency that manifests itself in different ways. The potency of the action takes some time before it produces the desired effect.

The *Advaitin* is dissatisfied with the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* as a system of philosophy and goes to the other extreme of *naiṣkarmya siddhi* or the philosophy of non-action. The ethics of ritualism is mechanical and secular and as a *dars'ana* it does not solve the ultimate problems of life. While *Karma Mīmāmsa* concerns itself with acts of duty which are to be accomplished in the future and which have for their fruit the temporary felicity of *svarga*, *Brahma Mīmāmsa* has, as its subject of enquiry, Brahman which is eternally self-existent and blissful. The changeless *ātman* falsely identifies itself somehow with the non-self or *anātman* consisting of the mind-body and becomes the fictitious *ahamkartṛ*. *Adhyāsa* or false appearance leads to *avivēka* or want of discrimination and lapses into *abhimāna* or egoism, and the false self gets entangled in the duality of the doer-deed relation. Every act of *karma* presupposes the *kartā* or doer, and this relation is due to *adhyāsa* by which the immutable appears as the changing until *avidyā* is sublated by *jñāna*.

[1] *S.B.*, I. i. 1, p. 110 and *S.B.E.* XLVIII, p. 153.

What is eternally existent, is opposed to what is to be accomplished. *Jñāna* and *karma* can never co-exist and it is only by sublating *avidyā*, on which the dual consciousness of *karma* and *kartā* is based, that the knowledge of the existent Brahman is intuited. The object of a *karma* may be *utpatti* or origination, *vikāra* or modification, *samskāra* or purification, and *prāpti* (attainment), but none of these four can apply to the case of Brahman. As Brahman is ever-existent, the idea of origination does not apply to it. What is existent can never emerge or emanate. What is is and never becomes, and the theory of moral progress betrays the inner discrepancy between being and becoming. Whatever is made or modified is fictitious. The ever-existent alone is perfect, and the idea of attaining something new stultifies itself. If being is not perfect in itself, it can never be made perfect. Brahman is the knowing self which cannot be the object, as the seer cannot be seen and the hearer cannot be heard, and even the metaphysical enquiry into Brahman as the object of thought is a defect of thought. *Vēdāntic* thinking is mainly negative, as its aim is to negate negation. When *avidyā* is disproved and annulled, Brahman reveals itself, or, to be more accurate, is realized, and it is self-proved, and in *mukti*, the *jīvā* continues as Brahman and is Brahman. To the rationalist thinker who seeks the inner *sākṣin* or seer by analysing away thought, the philosophy of activism is bound to be repugnant. When the *Mīmāmsaka* turns theistic and substitutes for *niyōga* or potency the idea of *Īs'vara* as *niyantā*, he does not improve his position. The idea of *Īs'vara* as the cosmic designer and its moral governor is honeycombed with antinomies and refers only to the illusory highest. No theist can explain how or why *Īs'vara* creates the world, and is yet free from the limitations of

creative activity and the self-discrepancy between human and divine freedom. It is more logical to affirm the self-identity of the absolute as *nirguṇa* Brahman than to believe in the deity of theology, whose cosmic will is ever confronted by evil and other imperfections. *Advaita Vēdānta* is thus opposed to the theory of deism, as light is opposed to darkness.

The *Dhyāna-niyōgā-vādin* accepts the *Advaitic* conclusions, but controverts its intellectualistic and ascetic trend. To him, there is no contradiction between the two *Mīmāmsas*, as the *Vēdic* imperative implies the *Vedāntic* affirmation. The imperative refers to what is to be attained and is unconditional. It creates the unseen agency of *niyōga* in the case of the worldly man. The seeker after *mukti* relies on the *Upaniṣadic* truth of Brahman as the one without a second, free from the dualistic distinctions arising from *avidyā*. The knowledge of absolute unity contained in texts like " Thou art that " cannot, however, be obtained by the mere cognition of the sense of *Advaitic* texts. The intuition of Brahman can be attained only by following the *Vēdāntic* injunctions which have for their aim the meditation on Brahman. The *Upaniṣadic* text " The self is to be heard and to be reflected and meditated upon " insists on the need for *Vēdāntic* culture and knowledge as a progressive realization of Brahman. The immediate intuition is impossible without the discipline of mediate or reflective knowledge. Since *avidyā* is a positive something and not bare negation like the square-circle, it can be removed only by moral discipline and metaphysical reflection. The attainment of Brahman is not the logical stability of non-contradiction, but the spiritual realization of *mukti*, which involves progress and perfection. *Mukti* is won by endeavour and is

not a state of sublation. The fear aroused by mistaking a cord for a cobra is not dispelled by mere cognition or logical sublation, but by the activity causing the direct sense-perception of what the thing before the fear-stricken man really is. The oral evidence of the bystander can never have the validity and stability of ocular and perceptual evidence. The direct intuition of Brahman can therefore be attained only by a process of meditation on its nature in the light of the *Vēdāntic* imperative. The self should be heard and reflected upon. Intuition and injunction relate to the same subject; if not, the result is the fallacy of reciprocal dependence. Textual knowledge is the cause of meditation and meditation is the cause of textual knowledge. The object of injunction and the subject of intuition are thus one, and therefore, by following the command, the *mumukṣu* attains unity with Brahman and is freed from *avidyā*.[1]

Bhāskara combats the theory of the *Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin* by his philosophy of *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* which holds that *karma* and *jñāna* are both necessary to the seeker after Brahman. He rejects the theory of *niyōga* as a fanciful and fallacious notion which has no *Vēdāntic* foundation in the *Mīmāmsa S'āstra* or the *S'ārīraka Sūtras*. Besides, if the *Upaniṣad* stresses the imperatives of duty and explains away the truths of Brahman as merely explanatory or glorificatory (*artha-vāda*), then *niyōga* alone would be the supreme reality and Brahman would be valueless. If *Vēdāntic jñāna* were true, it would lead to agnosticism and ritualistic formalism. While the non-dualist prefers the contemplative ideal to that of activism and favours the way of asceticism, the moralist of the *Mīmāmsa* type extols the supreme law of *dharma* as the

[1] *S.B.*, I. i. 4, p. 147 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 185.

only sanction for life and condemns the idea of abandoning activity as a lapse into inertia. Bhāskara claims to avoid the extremes of intellectualism and voluntarism by synthesizing *karma* and *jñāna*, by rationalizing *karma* and moralizing *jñāna*. If *jñāna* is immediate knowledge of Brahman, there can be no degrees in sublation and stages in *mukti*; hence it is both mediate and immediate. *Karma* is both for the *avidvān* and for the *vidvān*. While activity is the same, the inner attitude is changed. The former impelled by inclination and utilitarian ideas seeks the pleasures of life here and in *svarga*, which are tinged with pain and are ephemeral. But when *karma* is changed into *niṣkāma karma* (deed done in detachment) and becomes an offering to Brahman (*Brahmārpaṇa*), it becomes one with *jñāna* and the dynamic element in spiritual life. *Jñāna* does not mean identity-consciousness, but connotes the intellectual knowledge of Brahman and spiritual meditation on its nature as *saguṇa* and not as *nirguṇa*. Brahman is thus the perfect self that is apprehended as well as attained. By His self-transforming will or *pariṇāma s'akti*, *Īs'vara* emanates into the finite as *cit* and *acit* without abandoning His moral perfection of *apahatapāpmatva* or purity. The spiritual object of the emanational process is to transform the finite self and remove its *upādhis* or limitations of finitude.

The *Niṣprapañcīkaraṇa-niyōga-vādin* [1] comes forward with his world-destroying view and says that Brahman can be realized with *niyōga* and by cosmic dissolution. The universe is Brahman objectified; and since what is originated is liable to destruction, the universe can be destroyed. When the illusory effect is destroyed, the cause remains identical with itself, and Brahman is self-realized when its effect, the universe, ceases

[1] *S.B.*, I. i. 4, p. 141, and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 176.

to be. Bhāskara objects to this view also on the ground that it has no *s'āstraic* sanction or rational justification. *S'ruti* nowhere refers to *mukti* as cosmic destruction. In *praḷaya* or dissolution, the world is, no doubt, dissolved ; but such dissolution is not destruction, but is only the absorption of the effect in the cause. If the world order is, however, destroyed, it would result in *sarva mukti* or universal freedom, which is not a fact. Rāmānuja's criticism of the theory is more acute than that of Bhāskara. He asks the *Niyōga-vādin* whether the world that is to be destroyed is false or real. If it is false, it can be put an end to only by knowledge and not by *niyōga* or injunction. If the world is true, the injunction that seeks world destruction is either from Brahman or different from Brahman. If it is the former, the world cannot exist, as Brahman is eternal. If it is the latter, persons perish along with the world, and *niyōga* remains without a substrate. Besides, the theory does not clearly state whether the object of the injunction is Brahman or the cessation of the world. It cannot be Brahman, as Brahman is then something to be accomplished and not eternal. It cannot be world dissolution, as it follows from the injunction and the injunction is carried out by the dissolution, and this mutual dependence is a vicious circle. Injunctions cannot therefore have for their object the non-dual knowledge of Brahman by the cessation of the world order.

Though Rāmānuja agrees with Bhāskara and other *Bhēdābhēdavādins* in their criticism of the theory of *nirguṇa* Brahman with its consequent rejection of the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa*, he condemns their moral philosophy of the *upādhis* or limiting adjuncts and *pariṇāma s'akti* or the power of emanation or transformation. If the absolute conditions itself as the finite

subjects and objects of experience (*bhōktā* and *bhōgya*), it suffers from the dualistic and dividing consciousness of the *upādhis* and is infected by its imperfections. The 'immanence' theory has the merit of recognizing the divineness of all reality; but has the fatal defect of predicating evil and error to Brahman. Brahman is both the supreme ground of the universe and the source of all imperfections and He has to suffer from the sorrows of *saṃsāra* in His own infinite way. The absolutism of *Vis'iṣṭādavita* differs from the schools of *Advaita* and *Bhēdābhēda* in its insistence on the equal value of metaphysics and morals and the acceptance of the philosophic validity of Divine immanence and the moral value of eminence. Though monism establishes the unity of reality, it is constrained to recognize the fact of the dual consciousness and face the dualism between the one which is real and the many which are an illusion, and the effect of *upādhis* and *pariṇāma s'akti*; but its most vulnerable point is its failure to realize the reality of moral and social experience and the distinction between good and bad. To Rāmānuja, the needs of ethical religion are as important as the demands of the dialectic method of metaphysics, and he concludes with the aid of revelational insight that the absolute purity and perfection of Brahman can be maintained only by affirming the reality of the finite self and attributing the imperfections of life to its moral freedom. The empirical life of *saṃsāra* is traceable, if at all, to the *upādhis*, whether they are *mithyā* or *satya* (false or true); but the true meaning of *avidyā* or *upādhi* is contained in the moral concept of *karma*. Ethical religion restates the *ādhāra-ādhēya* relation of metaphysics in terms of *niyantā* and *niyāmya* (the ruler and the ruled), and defines Brahman as *Īs'vara*, the moral ruler of the universe who controls *māyā* and is not conditioned by it.

Rāmānuja repudiates and rejects the *niyōga* theories advanced by the *Pūrva Mīmāmsaka*, the *Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin* and the *Niṣprapañca-niyōga-vādin* as mere mental constructions without any *Vēdāntic* foundation and insists on reformulating the system in the light of the theistic idea of *Is'vara*. *Niyōga* is a mechanical device without any spiritual content and immanent purpose, and is therefore atheistic, and is to be reinterpreted as *niyantā* or the Creator and Ruler of the universe who dispenses justice according to merit. The motive of conduct is not only an imperative to be obeyed, but also a good to be attained, and there can be no endeavour without an end. The *Mīmāmsaka* himself (that is the Bhaṭṭa) admits this truth when he says that the *Vēdic* 'ought' like 'Do this *yāga*' presupposes an end to be attained like the pleasures of *svarga*. Doing duty for the sake of duty will be formal and empty, if it is emptied of emotional content and the moral assurance that dutifulness will be crowned with happiness. The *Vēdic* imperative of *dharma*, which is the subject-matter of the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* (*karma vicāra*), therefore, requires reorientation in the light of the *Vēdāntic* philosophy of Brahman. The end of moral endeavour is the realization of Brahman and the attainment of eternal bliss. The ethics of the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* has its value only when it is related to the *Vēdāntic* good as revealed in the *Uttara Mīmāmsa*; but there is no contradiction between the two. The two *Mīmāmsas* are really integral parts of one systematic whole, and their object is to lead the seeker after truth step by step till he ascends to his home in the absolute. Rāmānuja, following Bōdhāyana, therefore thinks that the entire *Mīmāmsa S'āstra* with its sixteen chapters beginning with the *Sūtra* 'Now therefore the enquiry into *dharma*' and ending with the *Sūtra* 'From there, there is no return' has a definite spiritual

meaning and value. The path of *Vēdic* duty is the devious way to *svarga*, and its pleasures are particular and perishing (*alpa* and *asthira*) ; but the path to Brahman is straight and shining, and it leads to eternal and infinite bliss. The boat of the sacrificial cult is frail and leaky, but the way of *Brahma-jñāna* leads to the shore of infinity. The *Vēdavādin* who follows *karma* thus realizes its perishing value and tries to become the *Brahmavādin*. The transition from *karma vicāra* to *Brahma vicāra* thus involves temporal sequence as well as logical consequence. The seeker after truth goes from *karma* to Brahman, from the world of perishing pleasures to eternal bliss. The finite self which is essentially *jñānānandamaya*, self-effulgent and blissful, forgets its nature, suffers from the ills of *saṃsāra*, and finally attains immortality by realizing its true nature and purpose.

Rāmānuja and Vēdānta Dēs'ika illustrate this truth by the parable of a young prince who in a boyish way strays away from his royal father, enters the huts of wild tribes and identifies himself with them.[1] But an *āpta* or trustworthy friend weans him away from his wicked surroundings by reminding him of his royal destiny and succeeds in reclaiming him. The father who was searching for his lost son is overjoyed to meet him, and the two are at once reunited in love. Likewise, the *ātman*, who belongs to Brahman, somehow superimposes on himself the idea that he belongs to *prakṛti*, sleeps in and as matter in the *praḷaya* state, identifies himself with the body of a god or an animal or a man in creation and subjects himself to the wheel of *saṃsāra* with all its hazards and hardships till he is made to realize his folly by a loving

[1] *S.B.*, I. i. 4, p. 157 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 199, and *Rahasyatrayasāra*, Ch. I.

guru. He at last retraces his steps, regains his self-knowledge, is freed from the fetters of *karma* and enters his home in the absolute. He belongs to Brahman and is, as it were, Brahmanized, and attains the infinite riches of spiritual sovereignty. The realization of Brahman is an awakening as well as an attainment. The world of *saṃsāra* is not a subjective imagining like a dream, but an objective order, which is the same to all the infinite individuals experiencing it. The view that space and time are mental constructions and that the world is created and destroyed by the mind suffers from the fallacy of super-subjectivism and its fatal consequences. As admitted by S'aṅkara, there is difference in kind between the world imagined or ideally constructed by the mind as *jīva sṛṣṭi* and the world *par excellence* which is created by *Īs'vara*, and what is given in the waking consciousness is more real and valuable than that of dreams and of the inert *tāmasic* state of sleep and stupor. An Alnascar's dream is, in practical life, justly rejected as a folly that is futile, idle and empty. The analogy of the idealistic monist that the *mumukṣu* is like the king on the throne who, falling into a reverie and imagining that he is a hunter eating and procreating like other hunters, awakens from the dream, may be adequate for subjectivism, but is not true to facts. Life is real and arduous and *mumukṣutva* is not a make-believe, but involves strenuousness. *Īs'vara* is not Brahman reflected in *māyā*, an eternal dreamer without any chance of disillusionment, a *māyin* that, as *virāṭ*, *Hiraṇyagarbha* and *Īs'vara*, suffers, like the *jīva*, from the hazards of the three states of consciousness and the hardships of cosmic evolution, but is the inner ruler of all beings without any taint or trace of imperfection, who is eternally self-realized and enables the *jīva* also to realize its self. *Mukti* is not moony effulgence or *candrōdaya* that is an awakening

from *avidyā* but the solar light (*sūryōdaya*) of *saṅkalpa* that is an awakening of God-consciousness by the destruction of *avidyā-karma*. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* steers clear of the extremes of the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* view of the mediacy of *niyōga* and the monistic view of the immediacy of *Advaitic* consciousness and regards Brahman as *niyantā*, who is the ruler of the moral universe and the supreme end of spiritual life.

The central truth of *Upaniṣadic* ethics that Brahman is the inner ruler of all subjects and objects of experience is brought to light in the *antaryāmin* text of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* as the answer to Uddālaka's question, " Do you know that ruler who is the inner controller of all the universe ? "[1] The immortal answer of Yājñavalkya is " That is Brahman, who is immanent in all beings as their eternal ruler, having the quality of *sarva niyantṛtva*." *Paramātman*, the all-pervading Self, is further defined by the *Subālōpaniṣad* as *Puruṣōttama* or the Supreme Self, who is eternally pure and perfect (*apahata-pāpma*). He sees without eyes,[2] hears without ears, knows everything without the instruments of knowledge and the impediments of *avidyā-karma*. The *antaryāmi vidyā* of the *Vēdānta Sūtras*[3] makes it clear that the essential quality of the *sarvātman*, the all-self, is the attribute of inner rulership (*niyantṛtva*) and immortality (*amaratva*) that differentiates Him from the finite centres of experience and their objects. The all-self that can be intuited metaphysically as the *ādhāra* in which all beings live, move and have their being is now revealed as the immortal ruler. *Sarvātman* or the universal self is now identified with *Puruṣōttama*, the Supreme Self of

[1] *Bṛ. Up.* III. 7.
[2] *Sv. Up.* III. 19.
[3] I. ii. 19.

the universe, who wills the true and the good, and whose will is eternally self-realized. There is no other seer or ruler, and He is the Ruler of rulers for fear of whom suns and stars and the whole universe move, and the *Dēvas* do their cosmic duties.[1] Cosmic rulership cannot therefore belong to the non-sentient *pradhāna* or the self-conscious *puruṣa*. In the marvellous figurative language of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* "Upon the same tree there are two inseparable birds of beautiful plumage. One of them on the lower branch eats the sweets and bitters of life in turn and is bewildered by his own impotence, but the other on the top is the glorious Lord (*Īs'a*), the brilliant Maker who is ever serene and majestic and by knowing Him he shakes off his sorrows and shines in his glory."[2] With a divine vision vouchsafed by the Lord, Arjuna beheld the cosmic form of *Īs'vara* and was awe-struck by its sublimity and infinity.

The idea of Brahman as the inner self of the self insists on the eternal distinction and difference between *prakṛti*, *puruṣa* and *Puruṣōttama*,[3] but denies their externality. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion recognizes the equal reality of the three existents, but gives different values to them in the realm of ends. Philosophy explains facts of experience as well as acts of will, and knowledge is not only what is logically apprehended, but what is ethically achieved. Reality is not only self-expressive but also self-determining, and there can be no self-directing activity without an active self. Moral

[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, III. viii. 9.

[2] dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṃ vṛkṣam pariṣasvajātē |
tayōranyaḥ pippalam svādvatyanas'nan nanyō abhicākas'iti ||

samāne vṛkṣe puruṣō nimagnaḥ anis'ayā s'ocati muhyamānaḥ |
juṣṭam yadā pas'yatyanyam is'am asya mahimānam iti vītas'ōkaḥ ||

—*Muṇḍ. Up.*, III. i. 1 & 2.

[3] *Vēdānta Sūtras*, I. ii. 23.

consciousness presupposes the freedom of the finite self and its immortality and the eternity of the inner self or *Īs'vara*. This view corrects the extremes of materialism, monadism and singularism. A philosophy of nature that makes matter the mother of the universe puts the cart before the horse, as it seeks to explain the reason and purpose of creation in terms of the non-sentient *pradhāna*. Selfhood and internal rulership, as S'aṅkara observes, cannot belong to *pradhāna* or matter. It is a materialistic view of morals to regard the self as a mode of matter subject to the determinism of *prakṛti* and its *guṇas* and the causal chain of *karma*. Matter is not a thing in itself as physical absolutism maintains, but is a thing for the self. It is not a projection of thought nor a non-ego, which is its opposite that resists the ego with a view to enable it to realize itself. The physical order has objective reality, but the natural ego that identifies itself with the physical world has no moral value, as it becomes the slave of sense and sensuality. *Ātman* is essentially free, but it cannot escape the determinism of *karma* and the endless perils of *saṃsāra*, unless it realizes its spiritual nature and attunes its will to the will of *Īs'vara* who is its inner Ruler. Nature is adapted to the moral needs of the self, and the moral law finally demands the immortality of the self and the existence of *Īs'vara*. The difference between the two *ātmans* lies in the truth that *Paramātman* is eternal and the empirical self with its endless births and deaths can attain immortality only by feeling itself from the slavery of *karma* and earthly life. The Self, as the eternal of eternals and their inner Ruler, lives, thinks and acts in us as the *s'arīrin* and the finite will is enriched by self-donation to the supreme will, and its value is conserved and consummated in the absolute. While the self has its own being, it is deprived of its monadic exclusiveness by the idea of *antaryāmin*

as the in-dwelling self of the individual. The Absolute of philosophy which is the *sat* without a second is thus the same as the inner ruler of all beings distinct from *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, on account of His essential eternity.

The non-dualist affirms the reality of the *antaryāmin* as distinct from *cit* and *acit*, but refutes and rejects it finally by denying the truths of practical reason and the god of ethical religion. Ethical religion may, he argues, be justified by saying that the *ātman* is a person having moral sovereignty and not a thing as a slave of sense. But will itself is self-discrepant and superimposed on Brahman by *adhyāsa* or false appearance. While metaphysics deals with what is, morals deal with what ought to be, and if the ought is realized, the moral concept ceases to be. An infinite will is self-contradictory, and the co-existence of two wills in the same body is inconceivable. The *jīva* is fictitiously hypostatized by *buddhi*, its false limiting adjunct. The very idea of agency, human or divine, arises from *ahaṅkāra* or egoism and the self-contradiction between pure consciousness and self-consciousness and it is sublated by the knowledge of the self-identity of Brahman, when the will and its world disappear for ever. The *Bhēdavādin* counters this absolutism of *Advaita* by arguing that, since the impersonal transcends the ethical distinctions of good and evil, it may be less than moral and that, therefore, the absolute offers a moral holiday to man. The reasons adduced by the *Advaitin* to prove the fictitious nature of the *jīva* apply *mutatis mutandis* to *Īsvara* and *nirguṇa* Brahman as well, and the nihilism and atheism of Nāgārjuna will be the only logical conclusion. If Brahman is beyond relational thought, it is beyond philosophic thought, and the monistic view is empty and idle. The *Advaitin* is

thus a light unto himself and denies what is alien to, or other than, himself, even if it is an inner 'other' as *antaryāmin*. If this be true, the reverence to the highest self or Vāsudēva, adored by S'aṅkara is strictly inadmissible, as such adoration has no place in *Advaita* metaphysics. If the absolute sublates the relational consciousness and is the 'I' in the transcendental sense, there is no need in the *mumukṣu* or *mukti* state for spiritual love and service which form the foundation of social solidarity, and egoism and self-culture may take the place of altruism. The *Bhēdābhēdavādin* accepts the direct meaning of the *antaryāmin* text, but his view of the absolute self existing as the conditioned self destroys the purity of *Paramātman*. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* reconciles the claims of absolutism and theism by co-ordinating the values of epistemology based on 'intellectus' and ethics based on 'voluntus' and defining Brahman as *ādhāra* and *niyantā*. The first category expresses the ontological immanence of Brahman as the *upādāna kāraṇa* or material cause and the second defines Brahman as the operative cause or *nimitta kāraṇa* stressing its ethical eminence and holiness. The absolute is the one that is the meaning of the manifold, but it is not infected by the imperfections of the universe. As the *sat*, Brahman is the all-inclusive unity or whole, but as the self or *niyantā*, He is transcendentally pure, perfect and holy. *Sat* is in space-time and not as space-time and is the self, while *prakṛti* is *pariṇāma*-ridden and *puruṣa* is *karma*-ridden. *Paramātman* is the all-self, but is absolutely free from the mutations of matter and the ethical defects of the empirical self, and is the *Puruṣōttama*. There is none good but God, and the supreme end of life consists in attaining godliness.

The moral idea of Brahman as the *Parama Puruṣa* or the pure and perfect self, who abides in the *jīva* as its *antaryāmin*

or indwelling Self is to transfigure its mind-body into a living temple of the Lord of *Brahmapuri*, and brahmanize the *jīva*. The *Dahara Vidyā* in the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad*[1] enjoins the meditation on Brahman as the small ether within the lotus of the heart which, without a taint or tinge of physical and moral evil, wills the true and the good, that are ever self-realized (*satya kāma, satya saṅkalpa*). This definition excludes the elemental ether and the finite self, and frees the Self from the charge of anthropomorphism. The infinite that is the abode of the entire universe has its home in the infinitesimal ether of the heart without being spatialized or conditioned and untainted even by a shadow of evil with a view to infinitize and perfect the self. The transcendental one does not lose its nature when it transforms the self. Likewise, the description of Brahman in the *Kaṭhavalli*[2] as the Person of the size of the thumb, as the Lord of the past and the future, that resides in the heart of humanity, is of the absolute that has no history, but enters into history to make the mortal immortal. The infinite, therefore, does not lose its infinity by residing in the finite and redeeming it from its evil nature. There is no contradiction in the co-existence of two selves in the same body. If contradiction as bare negation or *abhāva* is non-existence like the flower in the sky, *jīva-Īs'vara* is non-existent. *Jīva-Īs'vara* cannot be the identity of opposites as the opposing quality cannot belong to the same subject in the same relation. The monistic theory of a hypothetical entity named *Īs'vara*,

[1] atha yadidam asmin brahmapurē daharam puṇḍarīkam vēs'ma daharōsminnantarākās'aḥ tasmin yadantastadanvēṣṭavyam tadvāva vijijñāsitavyam iti | *Ch. Up.* VIII. i. 1.

ēṣa ātmā apahatapāpmā vijarō vimṛtyur vis'ōkō vijighatsō apipāsaḥ satyakāmaḥ satyasaṅkalpaḥ.—*Ch. Up.*, VII. i. 5.

[2] aṅguṣṭha mātraḥ puruṣō madhyē ātmani tiṣṭhati |
īs'ānō bhūtabhavyasya.—*Kaṭh. Up.*, II. iv. 12.

aṅguṣṭha mātraḥ puruṣōntarātmā
sadā janānām hṛdayē sanniviṣṭaḥ—*Kaṭh. Up.*, II vi. 17.

which is the infinite-finite or being-becoming as a true lie to accommodate the empirically-minded, is unsatisfactory to the theist, useless to the monist and liable to the charge of *s'rutahāni* or violation of scriptural integrity. If the two are not contradictories or contraries but are differents, then an identity of distincts is conceivable, *jīva* and *Īs'vara* can be together in peace without being sublated and swallowed up by *nirguṇa* Brahman. The *jīva* realizes its nature as *ātman*; it attunes itself to the will of the Supreme Self. Brahman is alogical and amoral and there is a real progression in spiritual life from the logical to the alogical or intuitional and from the moral idea of *karma* and *puṇṇya-pāpa* to the amoral idea of essential immortality. The Being that is beyond space-time as the greater than the greatest seeks its abode in the heart of all sentient beings as the smaller than the smallest in order to impart its infinity and eternal life to them.

The subject-object relation is applicable to ethical as well as intellectual experience, and the ultimate subject of every moral judgment is the inner ruler or *Paramātman*. This truth is elicited by the *Gīta* analysis of every act of *karma* or voluntary action into the five factors of the body, the vital functions, the mind and the conative sense-organs, the finite self and *Īs'vara*.[1] The body composed of the five elements provides the physical foundation for moral life. The five *prāṇas* sustain the life of the bodily organism as without the *prāṇa* the physiological organs would cease to function, and the body would be dissolved. The conative sense organs and the mind in its volitional aspect represent the dynamic side of moral endeavour. The finite self with its free will is the doer of the deed and is the subject of moral experience. It uses

[1] *B.G.*, XVIII. 14.

the tools of action when it chooses to do so, and does not use them when it ceases to act. But the final subject of all action from the religious point of view is the inner Divinity that is in the self as the Creator of creators. The integrity of ethical religion is destroyed if any one of these factors is omitted, and the result will be fractional views of the philosophy of morals. The *Cārvāka* or materialist like Virōcana may regard the self as the by-product of matter and the result of sexual selection. To him the gratification of the lusts of the flesh would be the supreme end of conduct. The *prāṇaist* may be interested in maintaining vital efficiency and in attaining physical immortality by a process of *prāṇāyāma*. To the psychological hedonist the motive of conduct may be the satisfaction of sensual desires. If the empirical self is impelled by egoistic inclinations, it follows the way of exclusive individualism and selfishness. The true *ahaṃ* or ego is the serene spiritual self as realized in the *kaivalya* state, but *ahaṅkāra* or egotism is the pseudo-self of *prakṛti* that claims to be *Is'vara* Himself, but, as a pretender to *paramātmahood*, it betrays its ego-centric nature, fights against goodness, and seeks to destroy the moral and spiritual order of the universe.

The Manichean fight between God and the devil is really the war in our moral nature between the soul power of the *ātman* and the brute force of *ahaṅkāra*. When the moral philosopher seeks in the light of the *Upaniṣad* to become a spiritual seer, he recognizes the religious foundation of morals, and discovers *Īs'vara* as the real Subject of all action. This discovery is more revolutionary than the Copernican theory that the earth moves round the sun and not *vice versa*. It gives a new orientation to moral and spiritual life, as it shifts the centre of activity from the little 'I' of *ahaṅkāra* to the absolute 'I'

that is the real Ruler of the cosmos. The living body is the *kṣētra* or arena of moral warfare; conflicting desires fight for supremacy, the self deliberates, decides and acts on account of its free will, and knows the final truth that its will is the fulfilment of the Divine will.

The exact relation between human and Divine freedom may be determined by contrasting causality and free will. Science employs the category of causality to explain the phenomena of nature, and such causal determination implies necessity and denies freedom. On the naturalistic view of morals, the spiritual self is phenomenalized and subjected to causal necessity. The *ātman* identifies itself with *prakṛti* and is therefore constrained to obey the laws of nature. As its conduct is determined by animal inclination and not by reason, it becomes the slave of sensibility, and freedom becomes a fiction. But when the self realizes its folly and knows that it is the *ātman* and not *prakṛti*, it raises itself from the scientific to the moral level, sheds its materialistic consciousness and acquires sovereignty over animal nature. Freedom and activity belong to *puruṣa* and not to *prakṛti*, but, if activity is a feature of *prakṛti*, then, as *prakṛti* is a common possession of all *jīvas*, all actions would be experienced by all *jīvas*, which is absurd.[1] The very term *s'āstra* connotes an imperative or moral 'ought' and therefore presupposes the freedom of the finite self. The world of *prakṛti* is the common theatre for moral and spiritual life and it is really the object and not the subject of experience. In the transition from ethics to religion, moral freedom is transfigured into spiritual attunement to the will of the supreme Self. The self as the *kartā* or free agent becomes the willing

[1] *S. B.*, II. iii. 36 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 555.

instrument of the highest Self or *para* (the Supreme). The empirical self in a sense suffers from the dilemma of determinism. As a mode of matter, its action is subject to causal necessity and it is not free; as a mode of the highest self its activity depends on the inward Ruler who by His wonderful *māyā* moves all creatures as if they were mere machines.[1] The self as a passive instrument of *Īs'vara* becomes a conduit pipe of His cosmic energy. This idea of divine determinism and pre-destination is forcibly expounded by the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad.* "Whom the Lord elects to lead upwards from these worlds, He makes him do a good deed. Whom He elects to lead downwards from these worlds, He makes him do a wicked deed."[2] Freedom of the self would thus appear to be a fiction from the religious as well as the scientific point of view.

But ethical religion proves the fallacies of the dilemma by taking it by the horns, offering a way of escape between the horns and by rebuttal. The dilemma is taken by the horns by insisting on the ethical personality of the *jīva* as different from the phenomenalized mode of *prakṛti* and the depersonalized instrument of divinity. Moral autonomy has its own intrinsic value, which cannot be explained by scientific necessity or the theory of divine determinism. The self can attain sovereignty over brute nature, and no one can subdue a man who has subdued himself. The spiritual self

[1] Īs'varassarvabhūtānāṃ hṛddēs'ērjuna tisṭhati |
Bhrāmayan sarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā.|| *The Gita*, XVIII. 61.
Vēdānta Sūtras, II. iii. 40.

[2] ēṣa hyēvaināmsādhu karma
kārayati tam yamanvānunēṣyati |
ēṣa ēvainām asādhu karma kārayati
tam yamēbhyō lōkēbhyo nunutsatē ||
—*Kauṣ. Up.*, III, 9.

is different from the empirical self of *prakṛti* and, being eternal by nature, it can neither slay another self nor be slain by it.[1] Besides, *Īs'vara* is a silent but not indifferent spectator of the moral self, as He permits moral possibility, and the moral self has the freedom to grow into the goodness and perfection of God or lapse into demoniac malignity by choosing the way of evil. Duty is the command of the inner voice, and the imperative implies the obligation to obey it. The *S'rī Bhāṣya* illustrates this truth by the analogy of the joint ownership of the same property by two persons, A and B.[2] If B wishes to transfer it to a third person C, he can do so only after obtaining the permission of A. The grant of permission by A depends on the imperative, initiative and persuasive effort of B, who desires the transfer. Likewise *Īs'vara* permits its 'other' to use its freedom. At first a silent seer with *upēkṣatva* (indifference), unaffected by good and evil, He enters into the moral life of the *jīva*, and permits it to exercise its freedom (*anumantṛtva*). He then apportions pleasure and pain which are the fruits of action according to desert (*prayōjitvatva*).[3] Ethical religion also points out the way of escaping between the two horns of the dilemma by the doctrine that the self is not a thing or means to an end, but is a *kartā* that can choose its way in a conflict of desires, and not drift between destiny and divinity. It is not fated to follow *karma* or *s'āstra*, but has the free will to choose its own career. The whole argument of determinism

[1] hantā cēnmanyatē hantum
hataḥcēn manyatē hatam |
ubhau tau na vijānītō
nāyam hanti na hanyatē ||

—*Kaṭh. Up.*, I. ii. 19.

[2] S. *B.*, II. iii. 41 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 557.

[3] Yathā dvayōḥ sādhāraṇē dhanē parasvatvāpādanam anyatarānumatim antarēṇa nōpapadyatē; atuāpi itarānumatēḥ svēnaiva kṛtam iti tatphalam ēvāsyaiva bhavati.—*S'rī Bhāṣya*, II. iii. 41.

can be rebutted by saying that the moral realm is autonomous and cannot be reduced to the physical realm or religious absolutism. Ethical religion reconciles ethics and religion by its conclusion that the self acquires moral sovereignty over its animal inclination with a view to offering itself as a self donation to the Supreme Self, who is the ultimate Subject of moral endeavour. The two wills then co-exist as one will, when the finite will is in tune with the infinite and there is no self-contradiction in such co-existence or self-communication. At any rate, this view is preferable to the illusion theory of ethics, which concedes that the Lord with super-excellent limiting adjuncts rules the *jīvas* with inferior limiting instincts, as it makes morality a make-believe and *mōkṣa-sādhana* a semblance.

This chapter may be concluded by summing up its main thesis that Brahman, the all-inclusive One, is *Īs'vara*, the inner Controller of all beings. The ontological view of Brahman as the Life of our life and the True of the true stresses the idea of divine immanence which pulsates through all beings and sustains their form and function. Truth is an essential quality of reality and is not reality. The idea of *niyantā* brings out the idea of the ethical eminence of Brahman and shows that the finite is not only rooted in the infinite (*svarūpās'rita*) but is also controlled or directed by it (*saṅkalpās'rita*). By His entry into the *jīva* as its inner self He is at once the Sovereign and Saviour of all *jīvas*. Like a king that inspects the prison as a free man, He is the king of the dark chamber. He is within all beings and without, near and yet far. Owing to the unity of purport of all Vedic knowledge the terms *sat*, Brahman and *antaryāmin* connote the same Being. In the light of the rule of *chāgapas'unyāya*, these terms ultimately connote Nārāyaṇa as the Supreme Self.

CHAPTER VI

ONTOLOGY III: BRAHMAN AS RULER AND REDEEMER

ĪS'VARA is not the illusory highest nor the highest conceptual interpretation of the absolute, but is the ethical highest in us, and His omnipotence makes for righteousness. The will of the Almighty is not the arbitrary fiat of a despot, but is rooted in justice. *S'āstra*, the only authority for discerning spiritual truths, no doubt, attributes absolute power to Brahman which transcends human understanding. But the idea of Providence as a Being with infinite benevolence cannot be reconciled with omnipotence. It may be contended that this is the worst of all possible worlds, as no merciful divinity would create a universe so full of inequality and cruelty (*vaiṣamya* and *nairghṛṇya*). The existence of evil and unmerited suffering appears as a blot on the Almighty, and is evidence of the reign of a malignant power rather than of a benign ruler. This is a serious charge against theism, but Bādarāyaṇa, the *Vēdāntin*, meets it by tracing evil to the moral responsibility of the *jīva*.[1] The inequalities in the moral experiences of men and communities and the injustices are the outcome of their *karma* and are not due to any caprice

[1] *S. B.*, II. i. 34 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 478.

in the Creator. The material cause of creation is, as Parās'ara says, the *karma* of the *jīva*. The law of *karma* is the law of causation on the moral level, and every man reaps what he sows[1]; *karma* and its juridical rigour are so relentless that not even the gods can escape the consequences of their *karma*. The law of *karma* does not, however, connote mechanical or mathematical necessity, in which each deed is the child of the past and the parent of the future. But it presupposes a free agent, who is accountable for his actions. The moral judgment is passed not on the deed, as the Buddhist thinks, but on the doer doing the deed, and it recognizes the intrinsic value of moral freedom. When ethics develops into a religion, it becomes a theodicy with a moral and spiritual faith in the Law-giver. Duty is a divine command and its transgression is a moral perversity or evil that deepens into sin, and merits punishment. Righteousness is fulfilled in the law of retribution. The lie in the soul arouses moral disapproval and incurs wrath, and it is by punishment alone that the righteousness of the law can be vindicated. But the picture of a vindictive God who hurls the offender into everlasting hell fire is revolting to the religious consciousness of Rāmānuja. The will of the Almighty is rooted in the righteousness by which He dispenses justice according to the merit of the doer. Theology insists on the absoluteness of the divine will, and ethics on the value of righteousness; but ethical religion defines *Īs'vara* as *satya kāma* and *satya saṅkalpa*, who wills the true and the good and realizes them at once; and the view that God wills the good is preferable to the view that what God wills is good. The former makes Him righteous and the latter despotic. The idea of *Īs'vara* as *karma-phala-dātā* or the Lord that judges man according to his *karma* steers clear of the evils of deism

[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, IV. iv. 5.

and Manicheism. The theory of an external Designer or absolute Deity, who makes the world and lets it go, is as repugnant as the idea that God forever fights with the devil or that evil exists as an impediment to goodness to be finally overcome by it. The view of Rāmānuja that *Īs'vara* is the operative cause and the *karma* of each *jīva* the material cause of the diversities of moral experience, satisfies the needs of ethical transcendence and logical immanence. Brahman as the *sat* is the immanent unity of the universe, and as *Parama-puruṣa* is transcendentally pure and perfect; the evils of life are traceable to the moral freedom of the finite self. The idea of evil as an illusion that envelops Brahman, an *upādhi* or limitation that conditions the infinite, or a defect in the absolute, carries no conviction, and admits of no religious satisfaction. A consistent monism should deny *avidyā*, if it is to avoid the dualism between *ātman* and *mūlāvidyā* and should destroy the plurality of *jīvas* if it is to avoid the perils of pluralism. Rāmānuja traces *avidyā* to *karma* instead of tracing *karma* to *avidyā* as S'aṅkara does, and he finally equates the two.[1] The former view attributes the illusions and ills of life to the *jīva* and leaves the absolute absolutely perfect.

The ethical religion of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is rounded off by the theory of *Īs'vara* as *Rakṣaka* or redeemer. The idea of *Īs'vara* as *karma-phala-dātā*, who apportions pleasures and penalties in exact proportion to the moral worthiness of the *kartā* or doer, is a legal conception which affords no scope for religious consolation or hope of salvation. The law of retribution demands an exact mathematical recompense for *karma*,

[1] Avidyā karmasamjñā *V.P.* VI. vii. 61 quoted in *S.B.*, I. i. 1. p. 72 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 101.

as every act of *karma* should bear its fruit, which can be exhausted only by enjoyment or expiation. It develops an attitude of quiescent passivity and resignation to the inevitable rather than that of optimistic activism. The maxim that what cannot be cured should be endured belongs to the ethics of passivity, but the maxim that what cannot be endured should be cured is the ethics of dynamic activism. It is shallow optimism to say that whatever is is right, but the deeper optimism asserts that whatever is right is. Evil exists as a fact of experience, but evil ought not to be, and the *mumukṣu* seeks to destroy it by active endeavour. Physical evil is equated with suffering, and may not be the effect of sin. Sin may result in suffering, but suffering may not be due to sin. But moral evil arises from the violation of a moral law, and it deepens into sin when duty, which is a divine command, is violated. Duty is the voice of God in the will of man, and it is a sin to omit what is commanded and commit what is prohibited, as it is an offence against *Īs'vara*. The sinfulness of sin is so deep that it cannot be exhausted by expiation. The law of recompense is an endless see-saw which offers no hope to the seeker after *mukti*, and it has religious value only when righteousness is fulfilled in redemption. Justice is not merely tempered with mercy, but is consummated in it, and the aim of punishment is not retribution but redemption. *Daṇḍana* or punishment is *dayā-kārya* or the work of compassion. Punishment is for the redemption of the wrong-doer from his career of sin by the inflow of divine grace or *kṛpā*. Forgiveness does not cancel *karma*, but transforms it by the organic blending of goodness and mercy. The grace of the *Rakṣaka* is not a supernatural potency that is infused into the sinner from without. The law of *karma* finds its fulfilment in the redemptive grace of God. Forgiveness is the foundation

of the moral law, and redemption from sin is its religious fruition; and this view overcomes the dualism between the supernatural realm of *kṛpā* and the moral realm of *karma*. There is no discrepancy or discontinuity between the supernatural and the natural, as the former is a consummation of the latter.

While philosophy explains the quest of reality by the self as *mumukṣu*, religion explains the quest of the self by the *Rakṣaka* or Redeemer. The idea of Brahman interested in brahmanizing the *jīva* is the key thought of religion. God seeks the self even more than the self seeks God, and He is aptly called the "Hound of Heaven." To the logical intellect Brahman transcends the categories of the understanding, and the absolute is beyond description and definition, but to the religious consciousness, He is the inescapable Redeemer who, in His infinite mercy, assumes suitable forms to recover, and reunite with, the lost self. The ascent of the self to the absolute is not so valuable as the descent of God into evolutionary forms and into humanity. The five forms of Brahman known as *para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *antaryāmin* and *arcā*[1] are not emanational categories but concrete expressions of divine *kṛpā*. *Dayā* is eternal and infinite, and it incarnates into humanity and is immanent in all living beings. *Para*-Brahman is the self-realized absolute as the Eternal of eternals, which is formless, changeless and transcendental (*tripādasya amṛtam divi*). In *Paramapada*, matter exists without its mutability, time exists as eternity, and the *mukta* lives without the moral limitations of *karma*. But in that divine life there is no scope for *dayā* and if everything is moveless and perfect, perfection has no

[1] *Yatīndramata Dīpika*, IX, 129.

meaning or value. There is more joy in the pursuit of the lost self than in the possession of the free selves of *Paramapada*, and therefore the metaphysical absolute becomes Vāsudēva, the perfect, to satisfy the meditational needs of the *mumukṣu*. *Īs'vara* as *vyūha*, with His infinite cosmic will, is the creative source and sustenance of the universe and is also the all-destroyer. The idea of *Īs'vara* as the 'eater' referred to in the *Kaṭhavalli Upaniṣad* and the *Vēdānta Sūtras*,[1] connotes the awe-inspiring nature of the all-destroyer, whose wrath breaks forth on all beings, causing universal destruction. But really, the devourer is a life-giving healer, and what is popularly termed destruction is the re-absorption of the universe in the *praḷaya* state, in which the distinctions of *nāma rūpa* caused by *pariṇāma* and *karma* disappear, and *cit-acit* exists as a mere possibility. In the history of the adventure of souls occur certain epochs of moral crisis, when egoism becomes so inflated and sinfulness becomes so iniquitous that *Īs'vara* in His infinite mercy withdraws the instruments of evil and thus arrests the wrong-doers from their career of crime and sin.[2] This is called *praḷaya* and has a soothing effect on the self. *Sṛṣṭi* is also a redemptive process and after the refreshment of *praḷaya*, the *jīva* wakes up to moral activity, enters on a new life, and is given a fresh opportunity for attaining freedom. The making and the unmaking of the universe thus reveal the redemptive mercy of the *Rakṣaka* and cosmology is to be reinterpreted as a *dayā s'āstra*

[1] yasya brahma ca kṣatram ca ubhē bhavata ōdanē I
mṛtyur yasyōpasēcanam—*K. U.*, I. ii. 25.
attā carācara grahaṇāt—*S. B.* I. ii. 9.

[2] āsṛṣṭi santatānām aparādhānām nirōdhinīm jagataḥ I
padmāsahāya karuṇē pratisañcara kēlim ācarasi II
—*Dayās'atakam*, 16.

acidavis'iṣtān praḷayē jantūn avalōkya jātanirvēdā I
karaṇa kaḷēbara yōgam vitarasi vṛṣasaiḷanātha karuṇē tvam II
—*Ibid.*, 17.

or philosophy of redemption. The third concrete form of *dayā* is the immanence of Brahman in the hearts of all beings as their *antaryāmin* without being affected by their evils. It transforms the perishing body into a living temple of the *Rakṣaka* and is capable of being intuited by the *yōgi*. Vāsudēva, the perfect Self, manifests Himself in the interests of the meditational needs of the devotee, as Saṅkarṣaṇa with the two qualities of *jñāna* and *bala*, as Pradyumna with the qualities of *ais'varya* and *vīrya* and as Aniruddha with *s'ākti* and *tējas* without any dimunition of Divinity.[1]

Avatāra or *vibhava* incarnation is the next concrete manifestation of *kṛpā*, and it is the periodic invasion of *kṛpā* into all species and into the history of humanity, when evil triumphs over goodness and creates a crisis in moral life.[2] It is the embodiment of the redemptive working of the *rakṣaka* in the moral will of humanity with a view to recover it from its sinfulness. The theory of the ten *avatārs* is often misunderstood by its friendly as well as hostile critics as is evident in the following nine accounts: (1) The *āsuric* type of men condemns the *avatāra* as the incarnation of *Viṣṇu* or deceptive *māyin* that allies himself with the *daivic* order in crushing the *asura* order in a covert way. (2) The popular view that incarnation is a supernatural descent of *Īs'vara* causing a vacancy in *Vaikuṇṭha* misses the truth of divine omnipresence and errs by giving a spatial interpretation to a spiritual truth. (3) The method of historic criticism finds in the *avatāra* cult a crude combination of history and mythology, which is said to characterize the epics and the *purāṇas* and illustrates it by

[1] *Yatīndramata Dīpika*, IX. 132.

[2] yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati bhārata |
abhyutthānamadharmasya tadātmānam sṛjāmyaham—*B.G.*. IV. 7.

tracing the modern idea of Kṛṣṇa to the fusion of three different earlier Kṛṣṇas. The Kṛṣṇa of the *Upaniṣads* is said to be identified with Vāsudēva of the Sātvata sect and later on with the idea of Nārāyaṇa in the *Pāñcarātra*. (4) The evolutionary view describes the nine *avatārs* as successive stages in the evolution of species. The fish, the tortoise and the boar mark the animal level; the man-lion, the dwarf and the militant Rāma, a higher stage in the ascent, and Rāma and Kṛṣṇa would, according to this view, represent the triumph of the whole process. Dust and deity mark the two poles of the plan of life, and even the worm can mount up to the level of Vāsudēva. (5) S'aivism is inclined to accept the biological exposition of incarnation and point out the imperfections inherent in the repeated birth and death of the embodied *avatār*, though it is the evolutional highest. (6) Natural religion is opposed to the supernatural account of incarnation, and gives a moral version, when it explains the incarnational process as stages in perfection. Any one can by *yōga* awaken the dormant *Kuṇḍalinī s'akti*, that is coiled up in the *Mūlādhāra*, and become a divine being or *yōgīs'vara*. *Īs'vara* is *puruṣōttama* or *uttama puruṣa*, and every man can become a pattern of perfection and heroic exemplar of humanity. (7) Supernaturalism protects against this psychological view, and insists on suprarational truths being explained in a scriptural way. It is like the Christian faith that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, who has entered into the history of humanity as the embodiment of infinite redemptive mercy with a view to annex it to God. God descends into man so that man may ascend to Him. Whom the Lord elects, unto him He reveals Himself and the Lord chose Israel as a race fit for His redemptive revelation. The theory of descent and ascent is an anthropomorphic idea, which has no philosophic value, and the

incarnational event as a unique phenomenon presupposes the arbitrary nature of the divine will, and substitutes magic for mercy. An appeal to the miraculous to frighten man to accept God takes away from the dignity of moral autonomy. (8) The allegorical view therefore explains away the *avatāra* as the symbolic expression of the *ātman* entering into the inner nature and witnessing the fight between good and evil. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* portrays the character of the *ātman* as the charioteer within, with reason as the driver, the senses as the horses and the sense objects as the highway. The vision of the *vis'varūpa* or universal form is a poetic metaphor of the working of the spirit in man, but is historically worthless. Some theosophic interpreters of the *Gītā* say that while *Para-*Brahman does not incarnate, the logos descends to the plane of the *jīva* and works for world welfare. (9) The monist thinks that the *Upaniṣadic* absolute degenerates into the theistic *avatār* of the *Gītā*, which is less real, though it may be more useful. The moment we think of *nirguṇa* Brahman, negation enters into its pure being and changes it into *puruṣōttama*. The concept of the brooding Nārāyaṇa is a symbol of the absolute 'I' confronted by the pseudo 'I' or non-ego.[1] The 'I' posits itself and opposites itself, and the universe betrays the self-contradiction of being-becoming from the post to *puruṣōttama*, though the latter is the highest conceptual reading of the absolute. An *avatāra* is, in this view, an extraordinary manifestation of human goodness and glory and not a supernatural descent of *Īs'vara*. The *avatāra* has birth and body composed of elements, though they are illusory appearances of Brahman.

The *Gītā* is the exposition of the *avatāra* by S'rī Kṛṣṇa, the perfect incarnation, and is an *Upaniṣad* that enshrines the

[1] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 539.

essentials of all the *Upaniṣads.* Every critic of the incarnational theme is constrained to accept its elevating morals, though he may explain it in his own way or even explain it away. But the value of the *avatāra* is that it is not a view of the map-making intellect that stains the incarnational Light, but the intuitive vision or the soul sight of the Redeemer as its self. Such soul-sight destroys age-long *avidyā-karma* and the *Gītā* guarantees God to every one, demoniac or divine, and offers universal salvation. An uncompromising infidel like S'is'upāla, who is consumed by the hatred of the incarnation, is worthy of grace as well as condescending rationalist to whom a theistic incarnation is a concession to the ignorant. The allegorical view is often a reaction of religion as a philosophy to the attack of the rationalist and the sceptic, and is colourless and timid. The Indologist as a historian who traces the evolution of God and dissects Kṛṣṇa into three aspects, applies the categories of time and space to what is supersensuous. The theory of one unique incarnation and a chosen people has the fascination of fanaticism, but implies divine favouritism. The monist who explains *avatāra* as the incarnation of the *māyā*-ridden *Īs'vara* and finally reduces Him to the status of the *avidyā*-ridden *jīva* follows the God-destroying logic of subjectivism, and does not respond to the logic of the heart. If monistic logic is vigorously followed, it should abandon the compromising attitude which says that the *Gītā* is the adaptation of *Upaniṣadic* absolutism to the needs of theism, and reject theism altogether. The theory of the *avatāra* is a spiritual truth which is entirely opposed to the geographical idea of descent, the evolutionary idea of the progress of *puruṣa* into *puruṣōttama* or the supernaturalistic view of a miraculous advent suspending the laws of nature. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* theory is faithful to the *Gītā*

when it expounds the *avatāra* as the invasion of the redemptive grace of the *Rakṣaka* into history in moments of moral crisis with a view to arrest the progress of social disruption, redeem the sinner from his sinfulness, and commune with the devotee who thirsts for His living presence.[1] The redemptive grace of *vibhava* is realized in the recovery of the *Vēda* from its destroyers, the extraction of immortality from the waters of life, the maintenance of the cosmic order and the law of righteousness and the living assurance of salvation to all being.[2] Besides these historic incarnations there are permanent incarnations known as *arcā* or the concretion of *kṛpā* consecrated by *bhakti* and *mantra*. *Arcā* worshipped in temples is the reservoir of the redemptive mercy of *Īs'vara* who enters into a formless form of His own without being affected by the changes of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. *Arcā* is a *Vaiṣṇavite* idea which is often misinterpreted as image worship of idolatry. The materialist who condemns it as a relic of fetichism and sees the stone or the wood and not the living and speaking God is like the scientist, who tries to understand the tears of love by the anatomical dissection of the lachrymal glands. To the idealist image worship is the projection of the idea of God into forms of matter or a symbolic representation of spiritual truths. The pantheist who sees God in everything sees Him in the image as well. The monotheist hates the anthropomorphic view that humanizes the transcendental Holy and the paganism of the idolater that moulds God into a graven image, as an anti-God cult and a heresy. The non-dualist accepts the logic that the infinite cannot be spatialized and localized, but draws a different

[1] paritrāṇāya sādhūnām vinas'āya ca duṣkṛtām I
dharmasamsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yugē yugē II.—*B. G.*, IV. 8.

[2] *Yatīndramata Dīpikā*, IX. 131.

conclusion by recognizing the psychological needs of the devotee and conceding the distinction between two Brahmans. The Lord may, when He pleases, assume a bodily shape formed of *māyā* in order to gratify thereby His devout worshippers.[1] The contemplation of God in the form of the sacred *sāligrām* is not therefore contrary to reason. Logic should subserve the demands of psychology and become psychological. Anthropomorphism in some form is inescapable, though, finally, *saguṇa* Brahman is only an illusory appearance of the absolute. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitin* does not accept the theory of two standpoints with its double view of philosophy and religion nor the monotheism (like Bhāskara's) that attributes qualities to divine personality and denies His divine form. If the theory of two standpoints is true and the real needs of the *mumukṣu* are conceded, it logically follows that Brahman is *niravayava* and *nirguṇa* in the .spiritual sense, that it is beyond *prakṛti* and its constituent qualities of *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and *saguṇa* in the religious sense that He is the redeeming self. The Infinite finitizes itself by having an *aprākṛta s'arīra* or eternal formless form of its own for the sake of the finite self that seeks it, and this divine form is the concrete embodiment of the will to save humanity. It is made of love and not of matter or *karma*, and it is not a concession to the mass mind steeped in *avidyā*. As the Infinite is the boundless Lord of tenderness and compassion, such self-limitation enriches the divine nature instead of conditioning it or diminishing its content. The Person with sunlike splendour individualizes the form as special providence in order to gratify His devotees and is the image and not in the image.[2] The divine form is called *s'ubhās'raya* as

[1] *Saṅkara Bhāṣya*, I. i. 20, p. 80 of Thibaut's translation. (*S. B. E.* XXXIV.)

[2] *S. B.*, I. i. 21 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p, 240.

it purifies and is accessible to them. The object is to render the divine form perceptually obvious and accessible to all as *arcā*, and this self-manifestation is a miracle of mercy. The five forms of Brahman as *para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *antaryāmin* and *arcā* are equally real in the philosophical sense, though from the point of view of religious value each succeeding self-manifestation may be more valuable to the *mumukṣu*. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitin* equates the Brahman and the *antaryāmin* of the *Upaniṣads* with Vāsudēva of the *Pāñcarātra*, the *Bhagavān* of the *Purāṇas*, the *avatārs* of the *Itihāsas* and the *arcā* of the *Āḷvārs*, and is opposed to the theories of sublation and subordination. To a monist like Deussen, with his view of non-contradiction and degrees of reality, the absolute of Yājñavalkya lapses into the pantheistic unity of the *antaryāmin* and pan-cosmic *ātman*, then into the God of theism and finally deteriorates into the God of deism. The theist counters this argument by employing the *tu quoque* method and says that the history of Indian philosophy witnesses the gradual triumph of theism over monism and pantheism. One school of *Vaiṣṇavism* with its faith in *advaya-jñānatattva* and *Bhēdbhēda* distinguishes between Brahman, *Paramātman* and *Bhagavān* by relying on the *Bhāgavata* text (I, ii, 12) and the definition of *Bhagavān* and Vāsudēva in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (vi. 5). *Bhagavān* is the supreme *sat* or *advaya-tattva* who is *svayaṃ-siddha* or self existent and the source of other existences, and who cannot be logically defined by means of genus and differentia. The letter *bha* implies the source and substance of the universe; by *ga* is meant the inner ruler; the dissyllable *bhaga* connotes the six qualities of dominion, might, glory, splendour, wisdom and dispassion; and the letter *vā* refers to the self which exists in all beings and in which all beings exist and this *mahāvākya* or great text of *Bhagavān* is applied in a specific

sense to Vāsudēva who abides in all beings as their self. Though immanent in all beings as their inner self, He is eternally perfect and the Supreme of the supreme, and is the *summum genus* and *summum bonum*. The Brahman of pure monism is, like the invisible ray of the sun, the eternal light radiating from the spiritual body of *Bhagavān*. *Paramātman* is finite-infinite and a partial expression of *Bhagavan*. Though Brahman and *Paramātman* are less than *Bhagavān* the absolute, they are in a *bhēdābhēda* relation with Him, and are different from the *jīva*. Vallabha in his *S'uddhādvaita* extols Kṛṣṇa as *Parabrahman* or *sacchidānanda rūpa* that is at once the Brahman of the *Upaniṣad*, the *Paramātman* of the *Smṛti* and the *Bhagavān* of the *Bhāgavata*. Owing to the *s'akti* of *āvirbhāva* or evolution *Parabrahman* emanates into the many like sparks from fire and from the *sat* form emerges *jagat*, from the *cit* form *jivas* flow out and the *antaryāmins* arise from *ānanda*. But according to Rāmānuja, Brahman, *Bhagavān*, *Paramātman* and *arcā* connote the one absolute as the perfect Self whose sole aim is to perfect the finite self and make it immortal. His self-manifestations are therefore not due to self-contradiction, *bhēdābhēda* limitation or emanation.

The infinite perfections of *Īs'vara* are dominated by the redemptive motive of *dayā*, and this view is a reorientation of the metaphysical qualities of *satyaṃ*, *jñānaṃ* and *anantaṃ*, the ethical idea of *amalatva* or purity and the cosmological ideas of omnipotence and omniscience. They are restated in the light of the redemptive motive of God as the attribute of *dayā*.[1] Brahman transcends the form and matter of *prakṛti*, and is *niravayava* or formless and *nirguṇa* or attributeless, but He embodies Himself as *dayā* to redeem the *jīvā*. There is

[1] Vēdānta Dēs'ika, *Dayā S'ataka*.

no God like unto the God of *dayā*, and His mercy endures for ever and rains on all. His infinite perfections become valueless without *dayā*. The Lord not only blesses the pure in heart, that follow the way of righteousness and keep the *Vedic* commandments, but saves the sinner that transgresses the law and has [done evil in His sight. He is the rock of love and the sole refuge of those who are immersed in desolation and distress. The Lord as judge saves the righteous but, as the deliverer with His infinite loving kindness, He seeks the iniquitous and forgives their transgression. His juridical severity is outdone by the tenderness of His forgivingness and He makes haste to redeem the wicked from their wicked course and gives succour to the lowly and the meek. *Dayā* inspires confidence in God as the God of salvation, and it soothes the broken heart and the contrite spirit. The *Vaiṣṇav.ite* experience of mercy is more marvellous and varied than the Semitic variety, and its unique feature lies in its universality. Deliverance works in multitudinous ways and enriches the nature of the Deliverer and entitles Him to be called by the following names : He is *sarva bhūta suhṛt* or the friend of all beings, *parama audāra* or all-bountiful and *gambhīra* whose quality of mercy cannot be quantitatively measured. He is *sulabha* or easily accessible to all *jīvas*, *ās'rita-paratantra*, who depends on His devotees, and *saumya* or approachable by all irrespective of their birth and worth. *Saus'īlya* is the intimacy that grows between the infinitely great or *Īs'vara* and the infinitesimally small or *jīva*. *Vātsalya* is the tenderness and affection that overpowers, as it were, divine omniscience and makes it forget the sinfulness of the sinner. The Lord of love may relish physical but not moral evil. *Mārdava* is the softness of love that cannot bear the pangs of separation from its lost self and

includes sweet reasonableness. *Sthairya* is the will to save the postulant in spite of his sinfulness. *Kāruṇya* is the sympathetic love of the Redeemer to seek and heal the afflicted *jīva* and give it succour and stability. *Mādhurya* is the inner sweetness that ever resides in the Saviour, who conquers evil by His seductive beauty and love and imparts His bliss to the *jīva*. *Audārya* is the divine quality of treating the bestowal of boons a privilege granted to the Giver of all good by His beloved and He is never satisfied with what He gives to him, *Ārjava* is the full, frank and free expression of the redemptive quality without reservation. *Sauhārda* is the heartfelt desire to help all beings and redeem them from their sinfulness.[1] The multitude of mercies has, however, one ruling motive, which lies in transforming the nature of *Īs'vara* as righteous judge into the deliverer or universal saviour.

The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* philosophy of the *sat* without a second transforms itself into the *Vaiṣṇavite* pantheism that extols Vāsudēva as the All-Self and the *S'rī Vaiṣṇavite* theism that equates Godhead with the dual self of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa or *S'riyaḥ-Pati*.[2] This transition is not due to the grafting of a new theory on the old or a historic growth due to the adaptation of *Upaniṣadic* monism to the anthropomorphic requirements of the mass mind, but is the self-expression of the inner redemptive necessity that follows from the divine nature of *dayā*. Brahman, who is beyond *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, expresses its will to redemption by a having twofold spiritual form of its own as Lord and *S'rī* that are philosophically inseparable though functionally distinguishable.[3] The cosmic ruler is

[1] *Vide* Rāmānuja's *S'araṇāgati Gadya*.
[2] Hrīs'ca tē lakṣmīs'ça patnyau.—*Puruṣa Sūkta*
[3] Īs'varīm sarvabhūtānām.—*s'rī Sūktā*.

ruled by love, and *S'rī* resides in the ever blooming lotus of love and is the very heart of the divine nature. *Is'vara* rules the world by His relentless law of *karma* and His holy wrath against the evil-doer is inescapable, but the rigour of *karma* is overpowered by the redemptive love of *kṛpā*. Evil is destroyed and the evil-doer saved. The Lord rules by law and *S'rī* rules by love and the love of law and the law of love are so vitally intertwined in the divine nature as to render nugatory any attempt at the philosophic analysis of their exact nature. The majesty of the holy law of justice is eternally wedded to the all-conquering might of mercy. While ethics insists on the reign of *karma*, and religion on the absoluteness of *kṛpā*, ethical religion reconciles the claims and counter-claims of *karma* and *kṛpā* by regarding the law of righteousness as the root of moral and spiritual endeavour and deliverance by *dayā* as its fruition. Goodness is changed into godliness by the inner mediating link of *dayā*, *Karma* is a criticism of caprice and is rooted in justice. but in its relentlessness, it affords no hope of deliverance and might lead to despair. *Kṛpā* is a criticism of *karma*, and is rooted in forgiving kindness, but in its inner flow it may afford no scope for moral responsibility and contrition. But the dual principle of *karma* and *kṛpā* overcomes their dualism by their harmonious interplay. Law is then pervaded by love and love is pervaded by law and in this interdependence lie the stability of the moral order and the guarantee of universal salvation. But Rāmānuja's *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, as *S'rī Vaiṣṇava* theology, is deeply interested in the exact determination of the relation between the Lord and *S'rī* and has given rise to two divergent schools of interpretation formulated respectively by Vēdānta Dēs'ika and Piḷḷai Lōkācārya. The former defines *S'riyaḥ Pati* as Lord and *S'rī*

as a dual self which is one in two and two in one and their co-operative identity is indispensable to the seeker after *mukti*. Redemptive mercy is coeval with exacting righteousness and in the eternal marital fusion of Divine law and Divine love lies the assurance that *kṛpā* is the crown and consummation of a contrite heart. If *Īs'vara* is omnipotent and mercy has only monadic power, the triumph of *kṛpā* over *karma* will be only contingent. Therefore *S'rī* is infinite and not finite[1]; and the concept of *S'riyaḥ-Pati* recognizes the foundational truth of ethical religion, that the holiness of law is ever wedded to the forgiveness of love. Each acts and reacts on the other, and in their interaction lie the stability of the social and moral order and the salvability of the sinner. Piḷḷai Lōkācārya combats this view by the counter-argument that there cannot be two infinites which are all-pervasive. The monotheistic truth that there is no God but God is negatived by the idea of a dual divine personality and frustrated by it. Lakṣmī is, therefore, according to Piḷḷai Lōkācārya, finite like the *jīva*, but is ever free unlike the bound self and she may be regarded as finite-infinite and as a living link of love between *Īs'vara* and the *jīva*. She is the divine mediatrix that intervenes between human culpability and the holy wrath of the Lord, softens the severity of divine justice, and changes the responsibility of the sinner into the mood of responsiveness to mercy. *Dayā* conquers *Īs'vara* by its innate sweetness and beauty, and converts the sinner by love and thus mediates between the saviour and the sinner.[2] While one school stresses the logic of monotheism, the other recognizes the equal validity and value of the logic of the heart and the

[1] Vēdānta Dēs'ika's commentary on Yāmuna's *Catus's'lōkī*.

[2] Piḷḷai Lōkācārya's *S'rī Vacana Bhūṣaṇā* : cētananai arulāle tiruttum īs'varanai aḷagāḷē tiruttum.

heart of logic and refuses to subordinate the ethical claims of theism to the religious demands of redemption. To the *S'rī Vaiṣṇavite* as a *Vis'iṣṭādvaitin* it is a sufficient assurance that *Īs'vara* is not merely a judge but is also a deliverer and the essential nature of Brahman is to brahmanize the *jīva* and, from the pragmatic point of view, there is not much difference between the disputants as followers of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism*.

That the formulation of a philosophical problem is more easy than its solution is borne out by the question of the origin and meaning of evil. It will conduce to clear thinking, if it is viewed from the standpoints of physical, moral and metaphysical evil. Physical evil is suffering due to hunger, poverty, disease, misery inflicted on us by nature as in earthquakes and volcanic irruptions, and pain caused by supernatural agencies, and is classified as *adhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika*, and *ādhi-daivika*, centrally, peripherally or supernaturally originated. Physical evil is contrasted with moral evil, and suffering is not always the consequence of wickedness. Selfless workers devoted to world-welfare often court suffering. Besides, pain is not always a punishment for transgressing the moral order. Matter is not essentially evil. Embodiment is invariably conjoined with misery, but there is no causal or necessary relation between the two. Embodiment is an evil only when it is the result of the false identification of the *ātman* with the body on account of *avidyā-karma* and not when it is voluntarily sought by the Lord and the *mukta*. The theory that *Īs'vara* has created the world to provide for human wants and that He bestows His *ais'varya* or wealth on virtuous men, assigns a commercial value to *karma* and destroys its intrinsic worth. It is not consoling to be told that evil is a blessing in disguise, and that pain is beneficial especially when it is

unmerited suffering. Moral evil is the violation of the laws of conduct based on rational determination, and is rooted in sensuality and the self-will of *ahaṅkāra*. *Ahaṅkāra* is the *āsuric* propensity in man that impels him to gratify the lusts of the flesh and indulge in voluptuousness, pugnacity and self-aggrandisement, and is therefore the matrix of all moral evil. Virtue is impelled by the *sātvika* quality, and induces the moral agent to choose a course of conduct that avoids egoism and promotes the ends of social welfare. While a good act is better than a good motive or intention, a wicked motive is worse than a wicked act, especially when it deepens into villainy, and taints the inner moral nature and subtly infects society itself. The *asuric* or satanic man makes evil his good, and is moved by motiveless malignity and cruelty for their own sake. Moral evil is intensified into sin, when it is a deliberate transgression of a moral law regarded as a divine command, and is a revolt against the law of God. The world of *saṃsāra* is the battle-ground between *dharma* and *adharma*, which seems to justify the Manichean theory of the fight between good and evil. The eternal warfare between the God of good and light and the force of evil and darkness referred to in Zoroastrianism involves a dualism opposed to the theistic idea of the *Rakṣaka*. Even the view of Christian theology that Satan fights against God and that man suffers from original sin is not helpful in solving the problem of evil. Good and bad are mutually exclusive, and this logical truth of exclusiveness is applied to the realm of ethical religion, and becomes the *raison de etre* of the division of persons into the good and the wicked, based on the principle of exclusion or antagonism. While the *sātvika* or good man who keeps the commandments of God merits the loving kindness of God and attains salvation, the sinner who offends

God is condemned as a heretic and hurled into eternal hell-fire. Ethical religion, in a more pronounced form, affirms the theory of pre-destination, when it holds that the Lord Himself elects some to pursue the good and follow the path of *mukti* and others to follow the downward path of malignity and sin, and hurls them into demoniac wombs and hellish torture. From the metaphysical point of view evil is, but ought not to be. God is good, and therefore the existence of evil and other imperfections has to be traced to the freedom of the finite self. Moral freedom is a real choice between different possible courses of action, and the *jīva* is responsible for the choice of evil, and *Īs'vara* is responsible not for the choice between good and evil, but for the pleasures and pains that follow the deed. The existence of evil in the divine plan is only a bare possibility, but it is the self that makes the possible actual and enjoys the fruits of its *karma*. Pleasure and pain are determined by the nature of *karma*, and they vary with different persons at different times. Nothing, *cit* or *acit*, is intrinsically good or bad (*apuruṣārtha*),[1] pleasant or painful and the hedonistic value of a thing is relative to the moral differences caused by *karma*. Thus it is the finite self that is accountable for the existence of evil and the experience of pain and not the Supreme Self which is its inner ruler and which is ever pure and perfect. But the ultimate problem of evil is not solved by analysing it into the physical, moral and metaphysical aspects and making the finite self accountable for its existence. To say that *Īs'vara* permits the possibility of evil, which He could have prevented, does not free Him from His responsibility, and this difficulty results in the dualism between human and divine will and their collision. The existence of evil as an instrument of goodness having an educative value is still a menace to

[1] *S. B.*, III. ii. 12 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 609.

theism as an ethical religion. The Christian doctrine of original sin as an inner depravity of the soul and a propensity inherited from the fall of the first man is contrary to the innate dignity of man as the son of God and to the redemptive mercy of God. If evil is real, it denies the omnipotence of the Lord and makes Him finite and helpless. The *Advaitin* holds that the moral distinction between good and evil is self-contradictory, illusory and stultified by *jñāna*. If evil is real, it cannot be destroyed; if it is unreal and non-existent, there is no moral problem at all. *Karma* deals with the ' ought ' and *jñāna* with what exists for ever, and the former is due to *avidyā*, which is sublated by *vidyā* which eventually sublates itself. The *Bhēdābhēdavādin* refutes this theory of illusion as an illusory theory, which makes moral striving a semblance and *mumukṣutva* a mockery. *Karma* is as much a fact of experience as *avidyā*, and the two are subdued by moral and spiritual discipline and not sublated by mere *jñāna*. But the *Bhēdābhēda* theory of *upādhis*, makes the absolute the abode of evil and other imperfections. When the absolute finitizes itself, good and evil, pleasure and pain follow necessarily from the divine nature, and Brahman is both saint and sinner, and being infinite, He has to suffer from evil and sin in infinite ways. Western absolutists like Bradley regard error and evil as only an appearance of reality, which is finally transmuted into harmony by the reblending of material. " Every flame of passion, chaste or carnal, would still burn in the absolute like a note absorbed in a higher harmony." Heaven's design can realize itself as effectively in a Borgia as in a Buddha, and the absolute is richer for every discord. To Bosanquet, good is made of the same stuff as evil, and evil is good in the wrong place. Suffering is due to finiteness and externality, but, when the

self is linked with the whole, which is the absolute, then evil and suffering are not annexed but absorbed, and they contribute to the whole. Thus the absolutist, eastern or western, is compelled by his intellectualistic zeal for unity to ignore the reality of moral evil and explain it away by a *volte face* as self-contradictory and illusory. Rāmānuja recognizes the equal claims of pure reason and practical reason, and rejects the monism that traces evil and error to the heart of reality as wild and vicious and as an outrage on the moral and religious consciousness. To him evil is a grim reality, but he throws the blame on the finite self, and absolves the absolute from any taint and trace of evil. The theory that *avidyā-karma* is *anādi* or without beginning is a frank admission of the inadequacy of the category of cause and effect to explain its origin and nature. The causal series leads to infinite regress, and the theory of its temporal origin is also inadmissible. Evil is neither an original sin nor an inherited propensity, neither an illusion nor a self-limitation, but it presupposes freedom of choice. To the *mumukṣu* suffering from the ills of *saṃsāra*, the removal of evil and sin is more urgent than the logical analysis of its cause, and when he has *Brahma dṛṣṭi* or divine vision, he sees God everywhere and good in all beings, and the question is dissolved.

The exact bearing of the problem of evil on the theory of *karma* may now be gathered up. The criticism of *karma* as a fatalistic and individualistic view of morals is controverted by distinguishing its three aspects, namely, the psychological, the ethical and the religious. The first explains the facts of moral experience by the category of causality and is the only theory that scientifically accounts for the inequalities of moral life, the tragedy of unmerited suffering and the

so-called triumph of vice over virtue. The moral law of causation denies contingency and caprice, and explains each *karma* as the child of the past and the parent of the future. The scientific view denies moral freedom, and is therefore deterministic. Consciousness is conative, whether it is sensory-motor or idea-motor, and the effect of every act, word and deed is conserved in the mind-body of the moral self tending to produce its own consequences with mathematical precision. What a man sows he reaps, and *karma* therefore involves the inexorable law of retribution, which affords no hope of escape from the iron chains of necessity. It is this side of *karma*, that savours of fatalism and breeds pessimism and passivity. But it applies only to a part of *karma* called *prārabdha karma*, which has already been set in motion, or which has already begun to bear fruit, like the birth of an individual. Many of our actions are derived from, and determined by, inherited psycho-physically organized instincts and dispositions and by habits of character, which have become a part of our nature. The natural self in us, which is a mode of *prakṛti* and its *guṇas*, is externally determined by mechanical causality, and the laws of retribution and *prārabdha karma* can only be endured and not cured and conquered. Every *karma* presupposes a *kartā* who is not determined *ab extra*, but who determines himself, and in every voluntary situation he deliberates on possible alternatives and decides on a particular course of action. The act of decision is an evidence of moral freedom and value, and the moral self is not a phenomenalized thing of *prakṛti*, subject to the law of causality, but is a person, who is self-legislative and can attain self-sovereignty by subduing his animal nature. The moral self can wrestle with destiny, gain mastery over his animal appetitions like *rāga*

and *dvēṣa,* and acquire self-sovereignty. He has the freedom to grow into the goodness of God or lapse into wickedness and be the slave of sensibility. Freedom of the self presupposes the possibility of self-realization or the knowledge of the *ātman* as different from the bodily self of *prakṛti.* When the moral self thus realizes his spiritual nature, the theory of *karma* acquires a religious motive based on the redemptive nature of *kṛpā* and work is transfigured into the worship of God. Freedom is the gift of God in order that it may be turned into the gift of the self to God, who is its inner self. *Karma* is then consecrated into *kaiṅkarya,* and the conflict of two wills ceases when the finite self attunes itself to the infinite.

The problem of the relation between *karma* and *kṛpā* involves a dualism between the principles of righteousness and redemption and constitutes the paradox of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* as an ethical religion. In every philosophic system as an intellectual speculation, there is an ultimate gap or surd which baffles the logical intellect and leads it to ultimate doubts and agnosticism or to a sense of holy mystery. The crux of *Advaita* is the dualism between Brahman and *māyā* and it is, like the riddle of the rope-snake, the riddle of reality itself. It may be a self-contradiction or a misunderstanding or an indefinable something. But it leaves us broken and barren by its God-devouring dialectics and the denial of the working of grace. The philosophy of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* as an ethical religion is likewise faced with the baffling question of the relation between *karma* and *kṛpā,* but in all humility it accepts it as a holy mystery which cannot be solved by logic, but can only be dissolved by direct divine experience. The *mumukṣu* cannot rely on the inner light of reason without the grace of God and the *guru.*

Ethical religion has, however, to avoid the extremes of rationalistic ethics based on the law of *karma*, and the religion of redemption deduced from the idea of *kṛpā*. The former is the ethical philosophy of *karma* or *karma vāda* as the inviolable law of recompense and retribution, which, as in Buddhism, has for its background the postulation of *dharma* as an eternal natural and moral order. It repudiates the reality of the finite self and of the absolute self and affirms that things are a flowing flux, and that the self is a fleeting process. It accepts Sāṅkhyan rationalism by denying the value of a theodicy founded on a faith in a theos or cosmic ruler, and goes further than Sāṅkhyan thought by substituting for the theory of *puruṣa* a cosmodicy deduced from the moral faith in the impersonal law of *kamma* and *dhamma*. The cosmos is *akartṛ*, without a designer or first cause and final cause. The deed continues without a doer as the wheel of becoming by way of cause. The theistic idea that Providence crowns virtue with happiness and that retribution is the penalty for vice is supplanted by the cosmodicy or way of *dhamma* which is as exact as the orbits of the planets round the sun. Pleasure and pain alone constitute the moral sanction for virtue and vice. The law of cyclic recompense is so austere that not even a god can escape its rigour. The law of righteousness or *s'īla* is contained in the noble eightfold path, and its aim is to face the grim fact of universal suffering or *duḥkha* and end it by righteous living and benevolence. Buddhism is a revolt against the ills of life, and does not favour the attitude of resignation to the inevitable, as it insists on stilling the will to live and the cessation of the process of becoming. But the moral faith in the law of cyclic recompense in which the effect can be exhausted only by expiation offers no hope of deliverance from

the ills of life on account of its mathematical rigour and relentlessness. Reflection on the ills of life and their universality promotes a mood of pessimism and sickmindedness which condemns the world as the worst of all possible worlds. Civilization is the flowering of life and its fading away. Life itself, with its unsatisfied desires, is a mockery and an illusion. The theory of recompense does not furnish any incentive for the exercise of sympathy. Buddha's insistence on *buddhi* as the only way of attaining enlightenment was answered by the Buddhist enthroning Buddha in the place of *buddhi*, as the saviour of life. The ethics of *karma* and *dharma* is rooted in the religion of redemptive *kṛpā*, and the moral feeling of the law of retribution is a failing which gives way to the religious faith in the Bōdhisatva or the Lord of Redemption. The world is not the domain of *kārmic* necessity, but is the living expression of the incarnation of mercy.

The Christian religion of redemption is a criticism of the Buddhistic law of *dharma*. Christianity is the gospel of the forgiveness of sin. The propensity to evil is, according to Christianity, an innate depravity, and deepens into sin, when it is a transgression of a divine law. Sin is the sense of guilt arising not from ignorance or error but from the collision of the human will with the divine, is blameworthy, and entails punishment. It is the doer that is punished and not the deed. The hideousness of sin is a measure of the forgiveness of God. Forgiveness is not the cancellation of debt but the assurance of mercy and the free gift of God. It is the offer of pardon to the sinner sunk in sin and soiled by it and not to the self-righteous man who conforms to the codes of statutory religion with meticulous accuracy and rigour. It is only the legalistic view of morals

that regards mercy as the reward of merit. To merit mercy is self-contradictory, and it breeds the bargaining temper. Justification is the work of God, and is not won by human merit ; and the good man is not the pietist that seeks pardon and has the consciousness of desert, but the sinner that is sought by the pardoning and suffering God. Incarnation is the invasion of divine mercy in a supernatural way into the history of humanity with a view to redeeming it from its sinful course. Israel was chosen by the Father in Heaven who sent His only begotten Son as the seed of Abraham to atone for the sins of humanity and thus annex it to God. The sinner is made righteous by the infusion of grace into his inner nature, and the burden of sin is removed for ever. Forgiveness and penitence go together, and the fact that sin is forgiven presupposes the faith that it is forgivable. Penitence implies the sense of unworthiness and utter humility and the absence of self-complacence and conceit ; it is analysed into three factors, namely, the knowledge of the sinfulness of sin, the feeling of sorrow that results from the thought of sin, and the will to abandon the way of sin by seeking the mercy of God, the Redeemer. The Son of God, who is the Son of Man, is a living link of love between sinning humanity and the holiness of the Father in Heaven, and history is the process of the pardoning God incarnate in human society with a view to annexing it to God by atoning for its sins. The problem of the relation between merit and grace will be fully dealt with in the chapter on *prapatti*.

Christianity recognizes the need for forgiveness, but its justification by faith or works does not satisfy the demands of ethical religion and solve the dualism between the ethical idea of righteousness and the religious faith of redemption.

Buddhism rightly stresses the moral law of *karma* and *dharma*; but, in its distrust of the moral self and the denial of the saving grace of God, it has starved religious consciousness and exposed it to relentless *Vēdāntic* criticism. The Buddhistic theory of the non-existence of the soul is refuted by the *Vēdānta Sūtras* as nihilistic and incapable of proof, and its futility is brought out in the history of philosophy, both in the west and in the east. Just as the realism of Locke led to the subjectivism of Berkeley and the nihilism of Hume and the reconstruction of philosophy by Kant in his Critique of Practical reason, the realism of the *Sautrāntikas* and the *Vaibhāṣikas* led to the subjectivism of the *Yōgācāra*, the nihilism of the *Mādhyamika*, and finally to the re-enthronement of *Upaniṣadic* wisdom by Bādarāyaṇa, which enshrines the truth of the self-revelation of Brahman in the immortal words "Whom the self chooses, unto him It reveals Itself."[1] The Christian doctrine of original sin and vicarious atonement does not elucidate the nature of moral freedom, the immortality of the self and the nature of God. The problem of unmerited suffering and ethical responsibility is more fully explained by the theory of *karma* and the eternity of the self than by the theory of one birth and creation out of nothing and immortality of the self. The *Vēdāntic* truth of the immanence of Brahman in all beings without abandoning His holiness is more valuable to a religion of redemption than the idea of God as the Heavenly Father. Lastly, the doctrine of a chosen people and a single incarnation does not satisfy the spiritual needs of the *jīvas* for a universal redeemer. The "Song on the Chariot" is therefore more satisfactory ethically than the "Teaching under the Bo Tree" and spiritually more satisfying than the "Sermon on the Mount;" and it is

[1] yam ēvaiṣa vṛṇutē tēna labhyaḥ.—*Ka. Up.*, I. ii. 22.

the *Gita* that is the ethical completion of Buddhism and the spiritual fulfilment of Christianity. Its ethical religion alone solves the dualism between retribution and redemptive mercy. Christianity is undoubtedly the religion of a pardoning God, but its Semitic doctrine of the Judgment Day with its theory of wheat and chaff, when the faithful are summoned to the throne of God and the heathen is hurled into eternal hell, is entirely foreign to the *S'rī Vaiṣṇavite* theory which starts with the idea of God as judge and ends with the incarnational assurance of salvation of all *jīvas* including the sub-human species, contained in the *Carama S'lōka* of the *Gītā*.[1]

The oft-repeated criticism that Hinduism is not historic betrays a misunderstanding of the true import of religion. If religion deals with supra-sensuous and supra-rational reality and history with the temporal succession of events, a historic religion is a contradiction in terms. But if history is studied scientifically by turning sequence into consequence and philosophically by discerning the ultimate meaning of human progress, the conflict between history and religion is narrowed down. The moral and spiritual progress of the *puruṣa* should be contrasted with the concept of the process of the nature of *prakṛti* and the purpose of God as *parama-puruṣa*. The world of *prakṛti* is an ever-changing *pariṇāmic* process and serves as a common theatre for the moulding of *muktas*. Matter is not false or evil, but the materialistic view of the *ātman* is false and evil. Moral progress presupposes the freedom of the *puruṣa* to gain self-sovereignty or be the slave of sensibility. Moral progress is a means to

[1] sarva dharmān parityajya māmēkam s'araṇam vraja |
ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpēbhyō mōkṣayiṣyāmi mā s'ucaḥ ||—*B.G.*, XVIII. 66.

self-realization. But even the realization of the *ātman* should point beyond itself to escape the perils of the ego-centric predicament, and it should find its completion in the religious knowledge of the *paramapuruṣa* as the home of all eternal values. The redemptive *saṅkalpa* of God is immanent in the human self with a view to freeing it from the fetters of *karma* and making it pure and perfect. The temporal process has a meaning only in the supra-temporal, and redemption is not a far-off divine event, as the idea of grace fulfils itself through *karma*. The purpose of Brahman is to brahmanize the *jīva*. The process of *prakṛti* and the progress of the self have their meaning in the saving *saṅkalpa* of the Redeemer. Divine *dayā* enters into the history of humanity with a view to moulding matter for the making of *muktas* and the inner meaning of human history is the brahmanization of all *jīvas*.

CHAPTER VII

ONTOLOGY IV: BRAHMAN AS *S'ĒṢI*

THE idea of Brahman as *s'ēṣi* completes the triadic thought of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and is essential to its practical side known as *prapatti.* The metaphysics of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* deals with the definition of Brahman as the absolute *sat* as the *ādhāra* or all-Self, that pervades all beings as their immanent ground, and imparts its substantiality to them as their inner sustaining life. The value of this concept of *ādhāra* consists in the ontological knowledge that Brahman is the Being of our being and the real Reality that is the meaning of finite existence both as its cause and as its effect (*upādāna* and *upādēya*). The self has its own separate being, but its ultimate meaning is Brahman, and it is therefore indistinguishable from it. The two can be metaphysically analysed but cannot be physically divided owing to their *apṛthaksiddha* or inseparable relation. The ethical concept of Brahman as *niyantā* or Ruler corrects the pantheistic tendency to equate Brahman with the world by its definition of Brahman as *nimitta kāraṇa* or instrumental cause and its insistence on the quality of moral eminence and holiness. While *cit* and *acit* have their being in Brahman, Brahman is not in them, as it exceeds their content, and is absolutely perfect. The value of this concept of *niyantṛtva* consists in the ethical realization that the self has the freedom

to gain sovereignty over its animal or *prākṛta* nature and attune its will to that of the infinite. The self thus derives its modal being and form from Brahman and depends on His will for its functioning. While *ādhēyatva* brings out the former truth of *svarūpās'ritatva* or modal dependence, *niyāmyatva* or the state of being ruled explains the latter idea of *saṅkalpādhīna* or dependence on the divine will. The idea of Brahman as *s'ēṣi* is a further determination of the divine nature and it is the consummation of the moral consciousness. Brahman is not only the ground of our being and the inner ruler, but is the goal of all our endeavour. He is the endeavour (*upāya*) as well as the end of life (*upēya*) ; a task and a fact ; and all thinking beings and objects of thought exist not in their own right but as means to His satisfaction. *Acit* or *cit* is not a being-in-itself, but a being-for-another. Matter exists as a medium for self-realization, and self-realization is not for self-satisfaction, but for the satisfaction of the inner Self. On the religious view, *paramapuruṣa* the Supreme Self wills the true and the good, and the conation is immediately self-realized, but moral life implies an aspiration not yet changed into fruition, and it is the paradox of ethical religion that moral and spiritual life is a pursuit as well as a possession. It is solved by the spiritual faith that religion is the truth of moral life ; and that the inner Redeemer is Himself the way and the goal. Just as the moral law is the truth of the natural law, ethical religion is the philosophy of fruition in action. The finite self has its being in Brahman, belongs to it and exists for its satisfaction, and Brahman enters into the *jīva* as its self to brahmanize it. The joy of such fruition is not a hedonistic pleasure of self-elation but is a divine quality. In the divine nature, activity and attainment go together.

While everything in the universe, *acit* as well as *cit*, has its being in Brahman and depends on its will for its form and function, *cit* alone is conscious of this sustenance and dependence. The self-consciousness of the *jīva* implies reason and freedom of the will by which the *ātman* eliminates everything that belongs to the world of *prakṛti* from the motive of conduct, and realizes its spiritual nature. If the *ātman* falsely identifies itself with *prakṛti* and its *guṇas*, it becomes the sensitive self or the product of nature, is phenomenalized and subjects itself to the external determinations of sense inclinations, and becomes the slave of desire. But if it exercises its moral freedom, it realizes its noumenal nature as a spiritual being and attains self-mastery and autonomy. Every *cētana*, as a rational being, has the self-legislative will to free itself from the fetters of sensuous, spurious individuality and elevate itself to the autonomy of the pure *ātman*. The true meaning of spiritual freedom thus won by moral effort consists in the knowledge that the real author of all our actions is the inner Ruler of all beings and in the dedication of every act of ours as the adoration of the highest Self or *paramapuruṣa*. The transition from the spiritual consciousness of *ātman* to the religious consciousness of *paramātman* or *sarva s'ēṣi* is a revolution in life from the ego-centric outlook to the theo-centric. The motive of conduct is shifted from the self to its inner self and every *karma* is consecrated as *kaiṅkarya*. The self gains its freedom to dedicate it to the inner *ātman* who is eternally free and self-dependent. In this way the *s'ēṣa-s'ēṣi* relation between the finite and the infinite is transformed and deepened into the relation between *dāsa* and *svāmin* or servant and master.[1] While *cit* serves the supreme will of the *s'ēṣi*, the

[1] *Rahasyatrayasāra*, Chap. III.

cētana or spiritual self has the conception of this end and offers his freedom as a self-gift to God as the real Self or author of all activity. While the *ahaṅkāra*-ridden *jīvā* regards itself as the centre of the universe, and suffers from self-conceit and moral destruction, the spiritual self attunes itself to the will of the infinite as the *sarva s'ēṣi* and *svāmin.* There is no God but God; He alone is omnipotent and His will is eternally self-realized. Every creature depends on His redemptive will for its being and function. But the self has the creature-consciousness that it is made in the image of God, and owes its nature and value to Him as the *svāmin.* *Dāsyatva* or the idea of being a servant of God is thus the *jīva's* consciousness of the eternal self-dependence of *Īs'vara* and the dependence of the *jīva* on *Īs'vara* and its free submission to His redemptive purpose. The supreme end of life is attained not in the natural world of *prakṛti* or the spiritual world of *ātman*, but in the religious sphere of *paramātman*. The idea of the *s'ēṣi* gives the highest meaning to moral and spiritual experience as He is the means as well as the end of conduct. This is the true meaning of conduct as *kaiṅkarya*, and the highest freedom of life lies in the selfless service to the Supreme who is the only Self without a second. We cannot live except when we die to live. When *ahaṅkāra* is destroyed and the *ahaṃ* or 'I' is offered to its inner Ruler as *svāmin*, selfhood has its true meaning and culmination in consecrated service to the Lord and in self-oblation to Him, freed from the taint of self-conceit and self-righteousness.

The principle of selfhood is central to religious experience, and to know the self is to know the *s'ēṣi* who is in us and with us as the Self of our self and is the fruition of our moral and spiritual consciousness. The terms 'philosophy of fruition' and

'anthropotheism' employed by Boyce Gibson in his *God with Us* may be restated in terms of the *s'ēṣa-s'ēṣi* relation. Fruition is not the attainment of hedonistic pleasure by means of egoistic offort, but is the end attained by self-effacement. It is the freedom of absolute self-surrender to the redemptive will of the *s'ēṣi* as *svāmin*. Moral experience has its true meaning only in the religious consciousness that the *s'ēṣi* alone is the actor. This view provides for the freedom of the self and also for the self-activity of the Lord as the ultimate determiner of human destiny. It steers clear of the extremes of monadic exclusiveness and monistic absorption. The absolute includes our selfhood and does not destroy it, and it is therefore the Self of selves smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest.

Vis'iṣṭādvaitic idealism admits the plurality of spiritual selves, but rejects the pluralistic or monadistic conclusion by regarding the *jīva* as pervaded or interpenetrated by the all-Self as *s'ēṣi*. Religion transfigures the neuter Brahman, the 'It' into the living presence of the Lord as the 'Thou' and the sense of the 'Other' as the *svāmin* is essential to monism changed into monotheism to meet the demands of ethico-religious experience. God is not the ultimate or the unmoved Mover or Designer beyond the cosmos, but is the intimate Self that is closer to us than our own breath. The spiritual withinness of the *s'ēṣi* is an assurance of His sure grace, but the intimacy does not connote identity or indistinguishability, as the intimate Self is also without us as the transcendentally Holy.[1] Otherness does not mean externality or

[1] ēṣa ma ātmāntarhṛdayē aṇīyān vrihērvā yavādvā sarṣapādvā s'yāmākādvā s'yāmākataṇḍulādvā ēṣa ma ātmāntarhṛdayē jyāyān pṛthivyā jyāyān antarikṣāt jyāyān divō jyāyān ēbhyō lōkēbhyaḥ I sarva karmā sarvakāmaḥ sarvagandhāḥ sarvarasāḥ sarvamidam abhyāttō avākyanādaraḥ ēṣa ma ātmāntarhṛdayē ētad brahma ētam itaḥ prētya abhisambhavitāsmi.

—*Ch. Up*. III. xiv, 2 and 3.

exclusiveness. The relation of unity in duality thus brings out the immanence of Brahman and also His transcendence. Unity explains divine intimacy which is essential to redemptive love, and duality, the eternal otherness of the Holy beyond us by demanding reverence and self-surrender. When the *jīva* is caged in *karma*, it is exclusive and egoistic, but when it sheds its self-centredness and surrenders itself to the *s'ēṣi* in utter humility, a revolution is wrought in its nature, and its spiritual content is enriched by the inrush of divine grace. Faith in the *s'ēṣi* as the only *svāmin* or Deliverer leads to absolute fidelity and loyalty, and self-surrender is the highest fulfilment of freedom. The *jīva* finds itself in order to resign itself to the Self that sustains it. The self derives its substantiality from the *ādhēya* aspect and its function from the *niyantā* aspect, and exists for the satisfaction of the *s'ēṣi*. The idea that the *s'ēṣi* is the means and the end of ethico-religious consciousness entitles *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* to be called the monistic philosophy of fruition and activism or theistic monism, as it does justice to the claims of the *jīva* as a self and the *s'ēṣi* as the Self of the self, and solves the dualism between human freedom and divine determinism.[1]

The *svāmi-dāsa* relation is rooted in the living faith that *Bhagavān* as *svāmin* alone is the Lord of our being, and in the feeling of absolute dependence of the *jīva* on Him. *Dāsyaṃ* or service is not prostration to God as enforced obedience is the pathological expression of a slave mentality which makes Deity a capricious demoniacal despot and the creature a cringing crawling servitor, but is the self-gift of the *ātman* that is not the slave of sense and sensibility or *indriya-*

[1] The Self is the eye with which the Seer of all things sees Himself and knows Himself to be divine.

kiṅkara, but is the autonomous sovereign of the ethical realm that exalts itself by submitting to the will of the *svāmin* and is *Bhagavadkiṅkara* or the servant of God. The motto 'I serve' (*Ich Dien*) was the spiritual motive of Bharata and Lakṣmaṇa, and the free man's worship is really like that of the wise Hanumān who, by serving Rāma, his Lord, could conquer the whole universe.

The concept of the *jīva* as a *prakāra* or mode of the *prakārin* is enriched by the *prakārin* being regarded as a personality. There is a difference between a quality and a relation. While a quality is the quality of a substance, a relation is between two substances. The *jīva* is now conceived not as a mere quality of Brahman as its *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* but as a self related to the Supreme Being as *s'ēṣi*. Relational experience rightly understood is not self-contradictory but is inter-subjective intercourse and loving relation between God and man, and enriches spiritual consciousness. The idea of God as an extra-cosmic Designer involves an external relation between the finite self and the infinite which is as prejudicial to religion as the absolute of metaphysics arrived at by the *nēti* method of the logical intellect. The absolute is not mutable like matter nor *karma*-ridden like the *jīva*, but is the *parama-puruṣa* that permeates all things and is the inner Self of all selves. The self is a centre of immediate experience and is a person and not a thing, but it has a sense of finitude. The *s'ēṣa* exists in the *s'ēṣi* and for the *s'ēṣi*. While the *s'ēṣi* is self-conscious and self-conditioned, the *s'ēṣa* derives its substantiality from Him and depends absolutely on His will. The western terms, spirit, soul and self, are not free from the defects of animism, anthropomorphism and personalism.

The finite self is the *ātman* which is different from matter, life and mind, and abides for ever as an eternal entity. *Paramātman* is the Self of all selves and is immanent in them without being tainted by their imperfections of *avidyā* and *karma*. The term personality applied to *paramātman* requires clear definition by contrast with the *jīvātman*. It is different from the mind-body made of the stuff of *prakṛti* and the *jīvātman* conditioned by *karma* and therefore the application of the human analogy is not quite relevant and adequate. The will of *Īs'vara* differs from the will of man, and He is absolutely pure and perfect and does not suffer from self-contradiction. Man is made in the image of God and it is false anthropomorphism to say that God is made in the image of man. It is crude teleology to attribute the world-order to a beneficent Providence who has designed everything externally for the good of man. If nature is bountiful, it is also red in tooth and claw. But *prakṛti* is a non-moral process of nature, and good and bad and pleasure and pain are entirely determined by the moral law of *karma*. The divine purpose consists in the deification of the self by *paramātman* entering into it and *ātmanizing* it. The will of *Īs'vara* is redemptive and the making of *muktas* is the supreme end of the mundane order. Brahman as the *s'ēṣi* is not the personal God of western theism as that view ignores the truth of the *antaryāmin* or indwelling Self. The absolutist criticism that personality, human and divine, involves the antithesis between the self and the non-self and that God is less than the all-inclusive absolute, has therefore no bearing on the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* view of the *s'ēṣi*. The term suprapersonal may be equated with it, if the distinction between *prakṛti*, *puruṣa* and *puruṣōttama* or *s'ēṣi* is borne in mind, and the religious consciousness of *puruṣōttama* or *s'ēṣi* is contrasted with the spiritual nature of the *ātman* and the mechanical view

of *prakṛti.* The philosophy of religion expounds the identity of existence and value by the comprehensive term of the absolute as *paramātman* that is not an 'It' or a 'He,' but a supra-personal self that enters into matter with the *jīva* with a view to *ātmanize* it. The relation between the *s'ēṣi* and the *s'ēṣa* is personal and spiritual only in this sense, and the concepts of *svāmin* in terms of the Fatherhood and the Motherhood of the Deity bring out symbolically the spiritual experience of this relation in different forms. These experiences may now be briefly considered.

The concept of the Fatherhood of God connotes more spiritual intimacy than the external view of *Īs'vara* as the Lord or King, and marks a transition from the attitude of the subject of a king to that of sonship or *putratva.* The true Infinite is not the Almighty but the giver of all good, and every *jīva* is an image of the Infinite. *Īs'vara* is not a mere life-force or creative will, but a self-communicating love and the conserver of the eternal values of life. The Creator sows the seed of the self into the womb of matter and makes it into His own image. The divineness of the self consists in its regaining the quality of godliness and the eternal values of life. *Prakṛti* is moulded for the making of the *cētana* and every *jīva* is, as it were, the son of God, and is the heir to immortal life and joy. The theistic idea of God as the Father of all is a living faith in the Lord of *Paramapada* or the supreme abode, entering into the self with a view to redeeming it from it, career of self-alienation and sinfulness and transforming it into His own likeness or *sārūpya* and *sāyujya.* Theism, in the strict sense, holds that the Lord is the life-giver and also a law-giver, who demands absolute obedience to the law of righteousness, and burns with holy wrath against the offender

who defies His will. Creative unity pre-supposes the uniqueness of the Creator and the fidelity of the creature to God the Father, and collision with His will entails punishment. He elects the good and eliminates the wicked, and is thus a saviour and a judge. He accepts the good and the godly, and hurls the sinner into hell. Meek submission to the will of the Father, in utter self-abasement and prayerfulness, is pleasing to Him, and merits justification and redemption. The act of prayer arises from the inner attitude of prayerfulness; it is not a vain repetition of words in a mood of self-righteousness, nor bargaining with God for worldly goods, but is the absolute trust in the Father, which consists in the thought "Thy will be done." Sonship extols the childlike simplicity and instinctive fidelity of the *jīva* to the Father without the sophistry of the dialectician and the service mentality of the subject. The son then knows the Father and the Father knows the son, and their reunion and the attainment of godlikeness by the *jīva* are the flower and fruition of the moral religion of the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of the *jīva* or *pitṛ-putra-sambandha*. Thus understood, the idea of the Father of all is entirely different from that of the father complex of psycho-analysis and the anthropomorphism of theology, higher or lower. Every *jīva* is divine and its divineness consists in regaining the quality of godlikeness.

When religion is conceived in terms of will and justice, it demands the adoration of the Creator as the Father of all or *jagat pitā*; but in the religion of redemption, justice is transformed into mercy. Mahā Lakṣmī resides in the heart of religion as the embodiment of saving grace. She is the concretion of *kṛpā* and *kāruṇya* and offers an eternal assurance to

erring humanity that the reign of righteousness is at heart also the reign of redemptive mercy. The Lord is the dispenser of justice according to merit or *karma-phala-dātā*, though He is the saviour, and justice is an insistence on the fulfilment of the moral law by retribution and recompense. But retribution is transformed into forgiving love. Law is pervaded by love and overpowered by tenderness. Lakṣmī lives in the everblooming lotus of creative life, and is the heart of divinity. She depends absolutely on the Lord (*pāratantrya*), belongs to Him only (*ananyārha s'ēṣatva*) and is depended on by the *s'ēṣa*. As the link of love, she mediates between the infinite that is omnipotent and the finite that is impotent, and transforms the majesty of law into the might of mercy. *Dayā* has supernal beauty and sweetness. By her beauty Lakṣmī lures the Lord and turns Him into the saviour; she draws the sinner by her sweetness, and the sinner is saved by entire submission to His will. Thus, in the ethical religion of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* or *S'rī Vāiṣṇavism*, the metaphysical truth of the absolute as the Supreme Self and as *s'arīrin* and the *jīva* as His *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* is restated in terms of the non-dualism of *s'riyaḥpati* as the creator of the world and the conserver of values. To the *mumukṣu* the Lord and *S'rī* are one, though, to the analytic intellect, they may appear as different and discrepant. The ethical idea of justice and *daṇḍadharatva* and the religious idea of redemption and *dayā* are reconciled in ethical religion. It has its roots in justice and fruition in forgiveness. The Lord rules by law and *S'rī* lives by love, and the two are indissoluble and eternally wedded to each other. While in Judaism and other schools of monotheism controlled by ethical ideas, law dominates love, in mystic religions love overflows law. Ethical monism co-ordinates and controls the two sides by the

non-dual unity of law and love. To the *mumukṣu* who seeks God and is sought by Him, his faith in *s'riyaḥpati* is changed into a soul-sight of the two as one, and, like the fragrance of the flower, the luminosity of light and the embodied soul, Nārāyaṇa and *S'ri* are indistinguishable.[1] The ontological problem whether *S'rī* is finite or infinite is not so important to the *mumukṣu* as the problem of *mukti*, and, judged from this point of view, the faith in *S'ri* as the concretion of *karuṇā* and the heart of divinity is vital to the religion of redemption.

Ātmadāsya is the realization of the *ātman* as different from the bodily-self made by *prakṛti* and the three *guṇas* and is the gift of the self-realized *ātman* to *s'riyaḥpati* who is its real self. The self has monadic being and is at the same time a mode of God. The more it sheds its spurious individuality made of *ahaṅkāra* and the dross of sensuality, the more godly it becomes. Self-gift or *ātmadāsya* changes the ego-centric outlook into *Īs'vara*-centric insight and the arc of individuality becomes so enlarged that the circumference is everywhere. In self-gift, exclusive selfishness alone is abandoned and not the self. *Dāsyatva* connotes self-gift to God, its inner Ruler, in the vertical sense, and the attribute of serviceability to other *jīvas* in the horizontal sense. This truth may be formulated as the idea of God as *s'riyaḥpati* or divine Fatherhood and Motherhood, and the fraternity of all *jīvas* as regards their essential nature. It brings out the spiritual intimacy between *paramātman* and *jīvātman* more truly than the ideas of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man alone. Every *jīva* is made in the image of

[1] Ananyā rāghavēṇāham bhāskarēṇa prabhā yathā.—*Rāmāyaṇa*, Sundarakāṇḍa, XXI, 15.

Paramātman, and has His eightfold perfections in so far as they are not obscured by *avidyā-karma*; and all *jīvas* are alike in so far as their essential intelligence is one. In their spiritual nature all *jīvas* are one, as they are selves different from the embodiment of *prakṛti*. It is the bodily feeling that separates a Devadatta who is a god from a Yajñadatta that is a dog, and fosters the separatist consciousness and hatred. But as selves, all *jīvas* are alike, though not identical, and in their essential intelligence they are one. The social ethics of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is thus founded on the solidarity of the spiritual universe and on the fraternity of all *jīvas*. The philosopher, who has realized the *ātman*, has the spiritual consciousness of *ṣamatva* or the similarity of all *jīvas*; but, when the philosopher becomes religious, he knows that *Paramātman* is the meaning of his self and the means and end of his conduct. The self belongs to God, exists for His satisfaction, and surrunders itself to His redemptive mercy. *Bhagavad kaiṅkarya* or service to God implies service to all *jīvas*. It extends in its meaning to *ācārya kaiṅkarya* or service to the *guru*, who has the mercy of God without His juridical severity, service to *bhāgavatas* who have devoted their lives to the worship of the Supreme and ultimately to all *jīvas*, owing to the indwelling of Divinity in their hearts. Viṣṇu pervades the universe as its Self and communicates His love to all beings and the whole *Vaiṣṇavized* world pulsates with *dayā*. The true *Vaiṣṇavite* prefers renewed births as an opportunity for spiritual service to the suffering *jīvas* to his own attainment of salvation and security, and he never rests satisfied till all *jīvas* are freed from the ills of life. He makes no distinction between the elect and the eliminated or between wheat and chaff. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* ideas of the indwelling of God in all *jīvas* and of *jīvakāruṇyā* leading

to *kaiṅkarya* to all *jīvas* are more comprehensive than those of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man as the term *jīva* includes even the sub-human species and the term *antaryāmin* stresses the intimacy between the two *ātmans*. The view that the idea of brotherhood is ultimately based on the identity between the *jīva* and Brahman, provides no motive for *kaiṅkarya* and spiritual love.

CHAPTER VII

ONTOLOGY V: BRAHMAN AS *BHUVANA SUNDARA* OR THE BEAUTIFUL

THE philosophy of beauty makes the realm of beauty as autonomous as those of truth and goodness, and an essential feature of reality. Metaphysical thinking, following the logico-mathematical method, dissects reality into bloodless abstractions, and dries up the fountains of emotional experience. Even Practical Reason, which affirms the primacy of moral consciousness, does not overcome the opposition between will and feeling, and reconcile the claims of free will and causality, and *karma* and *kṛpā*. Beauty is destroyed by intellectualizing it. While the tools of thought and the rules of conduct reduce the spiritual spontaneity of life into dead symbols and rigid formulae, it is the 'vision and faculty divine' of the artist that intuits the beauty that is in nature and man and beyond them. It is the aesthetic experience of Brahman as the Beautiful that dissolves the riddles of thought as Pure Reason and Practical Reason, and leads to immortal bliss. While the epistemological enquiry into truth and the ethical determination of goodness are problems of life, the aesthetic experience of beauty is immediate and not mediate. It is more a possession than a problem. Though beauty is alogical, it can be analysed and rendered articulate. Beauty is more

attractive than truth and goodness, and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is the only religion that recognizes the eternal value of beauty as an essential factor in the divine plan of soul-making. While the *Vēdānta Sūtras* systematize the truths of *Vēdānta* and the *Gītā* formulates its ethics, the *Bhāgavata* intuits the nature of Brahman as *bhuvana sundara* or the Beauty of the world that is expressed in nature and is not exhausted by it. The cosmos is concord and not discord, and is the creative expression of the divine *līlā* or sport of love, and the Lord vivifies the *jīva* by sowing the seed of His primal beauty into its inner being. The beauties of nature and the fair forms of human and celestial beings are but partial revelations of the unsurpassed beauty of Brahman. Reality is essentially beautiful, but the worldling steeped in sensuality renders it ugly. When, however, the worldling turns into a mystic, his vision is transformed, and he communes with Beauty, and is lost in the ecstasy of that communion. *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* aesthetics is a systematic exposition of the nature of Brahman as *bhuvana sundara* and has more value than the ideas of Brahman as *ādhāra* and *niyantā*. Though it may not fit into the triad of *ādhāra*, *niyantā* and *s'ēṣi*, it satisfies the triple ideals of value-philosophy familiarly known as truth, goodness and beauty.

Aesthetics as a philosophy deals with the discovery of beauty and its criticism. Its nature and scope can be determined by a constructive criticism of the theories advocated by its different western exponents in the light of the *Upaniṣadic* method of spiritual elimination or induction.[1] The naturalistic view of the beautiful merges aesthetics into

[1] *Vide* the author's work, *The Philosophy of the Beautiful*, for a detailed study of what is summarized here.

physics and traces it to the harmony that somehow arises in the hang of things. The beautiful can be explained mechanically by analysing its elements like symmetry, variety and smoothness. The next is the biological theory, which drives it from the vital functions. The play impulse is, according to it, the spontaneous expenditure of surplus energy. Beauty is also genetically explained as the by-product of the sexual urge. Phallic and Freudian literature is the development of sexual monstrosity and is the explanation of the normal by the abnormal, and it has little religious value. The third is the psychological view which describes beauty in terms of sense-impressions and their harmonious associations resulting in the agreeable feeling of pleasure. The pleasure theory, that a thing is beautiful if it causes pleasure, is too wide, and the converse is not true. All these theories explain the higher by the lower and fail to recognize the intrinsic nature of beauty, which shines like a star in its own light and has a self-communicating value. Beauty is not the quality of a thing that causes pleasure to the subject, nor is it a subjective creation. It is an immediate spiritual experience exalted by disinterested imagination, and is therefore the object of universal appreciation and satisfaction. Beauty, as an intuitional expression, has more aesthetic value than beauty as a dialectic unity like that of Hegel. Dialectics, however, has no direct influence on aesthetics. Aesthetics, as an organ of philosophy, defines beauty as an essential quality of Reality, which is transfigured into a mystic vision. In this way, the science of beauty is reinterpreted as a philosophy first by a process of creative criticism and then as a mystic view. Art criticism may be made in a realistic and idealistic way. While the realist relies on the representation of external beauty, the idealist defines beauty as a mental construction and

an inner contemplation, and makes art subjective. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* corrects these extremes by explaining beauty as both immanent in nature and transcendent. Beauty is also evaluated from the standpoints of classicism and romanticism. The former type follows the *a priori* way, accepts absolute standards, and breeds the attitude of loyalty and reverence to tradition. But the romantic temper revolts against dogmatism and scholasticism, and delights in self-creative freedom and spontaneity. Its motto is not acceptance but adventure, and it is expression for the sake of expression. But the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* view of *rasa* and *dhvani* avoids scholasticism and sentimentalism, when it insists on the intuition of the beautiful as the fulfilment of a disciplined mind freed from sensual ugliness. Aesthetics as art criticism applies the criteria of immanence and transcendence, and elevates the science and art of aesthetics into a philosophy as the critique of the creative impulse. It is the intuitive expression of infinite beauty through the medium of the finite, and it portrays the beauties of nature and the embodied self as partial revelations of the absolute beauty of God as *param jyōtis* or the supreme shining self and *bhuvana sundara* without any shade of ugliness.

Aesthetics, like ethics and epistemology, is ultimately rooted in metaphysics. In modern western thought it was Kant who first recognized the autonomous value of the beautiful; but he defined it subjectively as a construction by contemplative imagination. Post-Kantian thought, like that of Schelling and of Hegel, formulated aesthetic philosophy, and it was further developed in the absolutism of Bradley and Bosanquet. To Schelling, the pantheistic idealist, art is the only organ of philosophy, and it is by an organic view and aesthetic intuition and not by scientific understanding that the

artist-philosopher knows the harmony of things, which pulsates rhythmically in all beings. The absolute is the identity of nature and spirit. The universe is a work of art, and nature itself is a great poem. Nature is not dead but alive, and has kinship with man. It evolves and becomes self-conscious in man; and, in artistic intuition, the absolute becomes fully conscious of its creative activity. Hegel stresses the rational, as constrasted with the romantic, side of the world of experience and regards philosophy as conceptual knowledge and not as artistic intuition. The absolute mind reveals itself dialectically in art, religion and philosophy, and art is the lowest stage, as it represents sensible knowledge and not spirit. Beauty is the ideal of art, and its evolution is symbolic, classical and romantic. The first is the primitive pantheism of the east, which shows the inadequacy of form and content. The classical stage is anthropomorphic, and in the final or romantic type, art transcends itself. The triumph of art is thus the defeat of art, when it becomes aware of itself, and passes into the absolute 'idea' of philosophy. Bradley also brings out the inadequacy of relational and discursive thought to know the absolute and regards beauty as self-contradictory and only an appearance of reality. Beauty is neither immediate nor harmonious in itself. It is self-existent, pleasant and self-contained; but what is pleasant should be pleasant for some one, and therefore it cannot be self-contained. If beauty is to be harmonious in itself, it should transcend this opposition. If it does so, it ceases to be beauty. But in the unity of the absolute, evil, error and ugliness are transmuted and they somehow contribute to its wealth. Bosanquet also thinks that beauty and ugliness are self-contradictory and are synthesized in the absolute. He defines beauty as what is aesthetically excellent, and it is feeling become plastic. The

philosophy of the beautiful fails to recognize the autonomy of aesthetic experience, the distinction between the beauties of nature and the spiritual self, and the difference between beauty and ugliness. Western absolutism, on the whole, has a *bhēdābhēda* tendency, and its fatal defect is the predication of ugliness to the absolute in its intrinsic or transmuted form.

Reality is essentially beautiful and it is ugliness that is a problem and not beauty, and the proneness to uglify the world is traceable to the creative freedom of the finite self and not to the infinite. Aesthetic philosophy thus affirms the intrinsic nature and eternal value of the beautiful as an essential quality of reality and not as an illusory appearance, and presupposes the distinction between the beautiful and the ugly. To say that the distinction is due to *avidyā* which is sublated by *jñāna*, or that ugliness heightens the effect of intricate and difficult beauty is to deny the value of aesthetics itself. The pluralistic view that there are atomic bits of beauty, which cannot be unified and harmonized, is as futile as the absolutistic contention that beauty and ugliness are relative and discrepant and that they should be absorbed or annulled. Ugliness is an empirical experience, but, in the transcendental state, it ought not to be. Plato is the foremost of the aesthetic thinkers of ancient Greece and his classical account of the absolute as the beautiful in ascending stages is highly suggestive owing to its kinship with Hindu thought. Bosanquet's exposition of the beautiful has the merit of recognizing the interplay of form and matter in aesthetic appreciation, though it has to be *Vēdāntically* reinterpreted. Beauty is formless, and yet has a form of its own. The form of beauty varies with its matter and determines its value. The soul of beauty vanishes if it is not embodied in its own idealized or spiritualized

medium. Beauty is in the look and feel of the medium. The beauties of nature are less attractive than the fair forms of birds and other animals. The triumph of beauty is the creation of the human form with all its intricacy and stability; but absolute beauty has a transcendent charm and eternal value. *Viśiṣṭādvaita* recognizes the relativity of form and matter and constructs a ladder of beauty from earth to heaven, and its view of absolute beauty is finally transfigured into an enchanting vision. Ugliness is the result of the finite self being soiled by sensuality; but when the self is released from its dross, it realizes itself as the embodiment of divine beauty.

The aesthetic philosophy of *Viśiṣṭāvaita* transforms the Brahman of metaphysics and the *Īśvara* of ethics into the *bhuvana sundara* of the *Bhāgavata*. The absolute of metaphysics becomes the beautiful God of aesthetic religion. The self-resplendent and unsurpassable beauty of Brahman is embodied in the universe, but exceeds its finiteness and imperfections. Brahman is *niravayava* or without parts and, in the ontological sense, transcends the psycho-physical changes of *prakṛti*, and is *nirguṇa*. In the ethical sense He is free from the imperfections of the *karma*-ridden self and has infinite perfections. As the True of the true and the super-Subject, He is infinite and beyond all conceptual categories, and, at the same time, has an infinity of perfections. But, to the *mumukṣu*, as a mystic who seeks the intimacy of communion, the ontological Beyond and the ethically Perfect have no value or attraction. It is aesthetics that mediates between metaphysics and ethics, and brings down heaven to earth, and elevates earth to heaven. Aesthetics is midway between sensuousness and spirituality, and bridges the gulf between the finite and the infinite. This truth is beautifully expressed in the triple idea

of Brahman as possessing *svarūpa*, *rūpa* and *guṇa*. His *svarūpa*, as *sat* without a second as *causa sui*, cosmic ground and super-Subject, creates a feeling of remoteness, and His *guṇas* arouse the sense of the Holy and the feeling of reverence. But His *rūpa* or form as *bhuvana sundara* and *Manmatha-manmatha* acts as an aesthetic copula between His *svarūpa* and His *guṇas* and brings to light the attributes of intimacy and attractiveness, which are so vital to the mystic consciousness. Brahman that transcends the world of *cit* and *acit* enters into the *ātman* with a view to deify it and, to satisfy the *mumukṣu* who is a mystic, He individualizes an *aprākṛta* or super-sensuous form of His own with bewitching beauty designed to remove the fleshly feeling of the *jīva* and beautify it. . The brilliant self that, as *param jyōtis*, illumines the sun and the stellar worlds is the inner beauty that illumines individuality. He, who dwells in the sun, the moon and the stars, whom the sun, the moon and the stars do not know, but whose body they are, is the inner Ruler Immortal.[1] The golden Person within the solar orb is the Person that shines in the *ātman* with a divine form of infinite beauty. This beauteous form of Brahman is not a concession to the *avidyā*-ridden *jīva* caught up in the self-contradiction of the finite-infinite, but is the incarnation of the super-sensuous Beauty that allures the self and ravishes it out of its fleshly feeling. The mundane beauty of Manmatha or Eros that soils the *jīva* is conquered by the supramundane beauty of *bhuvana sundara*, and He is therefore called *Manmatha-manmatha* or

[1] ya ādityē tiṣthan ādityād antaraḥ yamādityō na vēda yasya ādityaḥ s'ariram ya ādityam antarō yamayati ēṣa ta ātmā antaryāmyamṛtaḥ.—*Br. Up.*, III, vii, 9.

yas'candratārakē tiṣthan candratārakād antaraḥ yam candratārakam na vēda yasya candratārakam s'ariram yas'candratārakam antarō yamayati ēṣa ta ātmā antaryāmyamṛtaḥ,—*Br. Up.*, III, vii. 11.

Madana Mōhana and not *Madana-dahana* who transforms and transcends Eros but does not destroy him.

The cosmos is a concord and not a discord, and is a living expression of the beauty of Brahman. From the metaphysical point of view, creation is explained as the self-differentiation of the absolute in which Brahman wills to be the many and becomes the manifold of *acētana* and *cētana*. On the ethical view the immanent world ground becomes the eminent *Īs'vara* or moral ruler of the world. The *avidyā* theory of *Advaita* and the *pariṇāma-vāda* of *Bhēdābhēda* are criticized by, and restated as, the ethical theory of *karma*, which traces the evolution of the species and their variations to the moral differences caused by the *karma* of the individual. The idea of an extra-cosmic Deity with an increasing cosmic purpose militates against the ideas of omniscience and perfection. The theory of *līlā* remedies this defect by insisting on the primacy of aesthetic consciousness and regarding the cosmic process as the spontaneous creative expression of Brahman as the divine artist.[1] Brahman is pure and perfect, and His will is eternally self-realized. But His omnipotence and perfection cannot be reconciled with the reality of evil and the fact of unmerited suffering. This is the most irrational and worst of all possible worlds, and no merciful divinity would make a world so full of evil and suffering. But aesthetic philosophy, as the completion of metaphysics and ethics, elevates the problem to the level of mystic intuition and gives a new meaning to existence and experience. While thought dissects life and creates ultimate doubts, moral earnestness breeds a sense of responsibility and sinfulness. The aesthetic consciousness disciplined by logic and freed from the uglifying effect of

[1] *S. B.*, II, i. 33.

karma sees everything with the eye of Brahman, and the world view is transfigured into an artistic vision. Creation is then intuited as the play or sport of the divine Artist, and is regarded as His recreation or *līlā*. *Sṛṣṭi* is the creative joy of self-expression and self-division and the evolution of *nāma-rūpa* is the evolution of infinite forms of beauty from the infinite Beauty that has formless form. The world of space-time is the eternal interplay between the static and the dynamic aspects of beauty. The free duration of time intuited as creative evolution but spatialized by the intellect is as one-sided as the static theory of reality which denies teleology, and explains the universe mathematically in terms of space. But the creative activity of God in the world of space and time or space-time is a symphony without any jarring note. Each self is like a note in the musical scale,[1] and marks a rhythm in the dance of divine beauty. The world is a poem of beauty, and its sonorousness is imparted to every part of it and makes it vibrate with its music. The divine Artist pours beauty into nature with a view to removing the fleshly feeling and other blemishes of the finite self, beautifying it and playing the game of love with it.

The beauty of Brahman is self-resplendent, and it radiates its entrancing joy to the world by beautifying the self. This art is known in mystic literature as the process of spiritual alchemy. The divine Artist assumes five enchanting forms of beauty in order to beautify the ugly self, which is sullied by *viṣaya kāma* or the lusts of the flesh. These forms are the transcendental or *para*, the infinite or *vyūha*, the immanent or *antaryāmin*, the incarnational which is historical or

[1] *S. B.*, I. i, 1, p. 67 ; *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 96 and *V. P.*, II, xiv, 32.

avatāra and the permanent or *arcā*. The *Upaniṣads* glorify the transcendental beauty of Brahman as *param jyōtis* (*jyōtiṣām jyōtis*)[1] where the sun does not shine, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor lightning. The *Vēdānta Sūtras* identify the Light, which shines above this heaven,[2] higher than everything else, in the highest world, beyond which there are no higher worlds, with the highest Person of infinite splendour in the supreme world of eternal glory or *nitya vibhūti*,[3] of which this phenomenal world is only a partial expression due to His *yōga-māyā*. In that world of beauty Yonder, nature as *s'uddha sattva* shines for ever as spaceless space without the passing shadows of *pariṇāma*, bodying forth the ideas of absolute beauty. The *Pāñcarātra* as *Brahmōpaniṣad* enshrining the foundational truths of *Vēdānta* exalts the *vyūha* form of beauty and the *Purāṇas* glorify the sleeping beauty that reposes on the milky ocean of infinity and, with perfect art, portray the creation of the cosmos as the awakening to life of the archetypal forms of beauty. The divine Artist is not an arch-illusionist that projects an as-if world nor an extra-cosmic personality that has an ever increasing purpose, but is an alchemist who makes a beautiful soul by removing its dross of sensuality or *kāma* and plays with it the game of love. The third aspect of divine love is the *antaryāmin* or Beauty that dwells in the lotus heart of all living beings as their inner Enchanter making them pulsate with its creative life and participate in its inner joy.

[1] tac cubhram jyōtiṣām jyōtis tad yadātmavidō viduḥ ||
na tatra sūryo bhāti na caṇdratārakam nēmā
vidyutō bhānti kutōyam agniḥ.—*Muṇḍ. Up.*, II. ii, 9 and 10. *Vide*, p. 109.

[2] jyotis'caraṇābhidhanāt.—*V. S.* I. i. 25.

[3] atha yad ataḥ parō divō jyōtir dīpyatē vis'vataḥ
pṛṣṭhēṣu sarvataḥ pṛṣṭhēṣu anuttamēṣu
uttamēṣu lōkēṣu idam vavā tad yad idam
asminnantaḥ puruṣē jyōtiḥ.—*Ch. Up.*, III. xiii. 7.

The body is not composed of dust or conceived in sin, but is *Brahmapuri* or the city of Brahman,[1] and is a living temple of divine beauty. The *dēvas* delight in dwelling in the human body and *Dēva-dēva*, the God of all gods, as *bhuvana sundara* abides in its *daharākās'a* with a view to vivifying the moral self and making it immortal. The great Alchemist transmutes the ascetic that shuns the body as a house of sin into a hedonist allured by the beauty of God and entranced by it.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Bhāgavata* have specialized in the philosophy of the beautiful and have glorified the *avatāras* as the incarnation of the super-sensuous and supra-personal beauty of Brahman in sensuous forms. The wisdom of *Vēdānta* is summed up in the *avatāra rahasya*, which is the most sacred truth or *uttama rahasya* of revelation and which cannot be described by words or defined by thought. The incarnation is not an illusory appearance of the absolute (*indra-jāla*) caught up in the contradictions of space-time-causality nor the embodied self with a psycho-physically organized mind-body conditioned by *karma* and subject to birth and death. The beauteous form of the *avatāra* is *aprākṛta*, not made of perishing *prakṛti* nor the product of *karma*, but is self-determined and self-evolved. Even the view of ethical religion is not adequate when it describes the *avatāra* as the descent of *Īs'vara* into the empirical life of the *jīva* and the history of humanity in moments of cosmic moral crisis with a view to punishing the wicked by taking away their tools of wickedness and re-establishing the law of righteousness. The *avatāra* satisfies the mystic yearning of the *jñāni*, who hungers for God and pines for the soul-sight of His enchanting beauty. The Ravisher of

[1] *Ch. Up.*, VIII. i. 1.

souls is also a self-suffering God who cannot bear separation from His 'other,' and His captivating beauty is even physically enjoyable. The beauty of *avatāra* is elusive and not illusory or erroneous. It has a seductive and irresistible charm. The beauty of S'rī Rāma was so entrancing that the *ṛṣis* and the *yōgis* of the forest of Daṇḍaka rapt in *samādhi* were spell-bound and became the Gōpis of Bṛndāvan to relish its immortal bliss. The *Bhāgavata* is a poem *par excellence* of the dalliance of divine Beauty with the beloved beings of the enchanted land of Bṛndāvan. The transcendent Beauty that is infinite and eternal, incarnates according to a divinely ordered plan on the metamorphosed beauty spot, Bṛndāvan, with a world-bewitching form (*trailōkya kānta*) to play the *līlā* of love. The metaphysical concept of *māyā* is now changed into the aesthetic idea of the *māyin* or divine Artist. The silvery Yamunā glides on in ever-swelling joy, the trees bloom, the lotus and the lilies blossom, and the gentle wind spreads its fragrance, the birds sing their sweetest songs and all nature wears a festive garb. The shining gods abandon their celestial homes and the *munis* renouncing their meditation are drawn into this charmed circle by its strange spell of beauty. The Holy of holies who is absolutely free from evil (*yōges'va-rēs'vara*) transforms Himself into the Ravisher of souls or *Manmatha-manmatha*, and it is only the pure in heart, that are free from the lusts of the flesh or *tṛṣṇās*, that can revel in the bliss of Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. The righteousness of S'rī Rāma is consummated in the rapture of Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, and the Lord of beauty is *jāra cōra s'ikhāmani*, who steals away the hearts of all and ravishes them out of their fleshly feeling. The fifth abode of Beauty is the permanent incarnation of *arcā*, in which the transcendental Beauty beyond the phenomenal world enters into the chosen forms of *prakṛti* as *vigraha*.

Arcā is not the idealized projection of creative imagination touched by religious feeling nor the symbolic expression of the infinite in the finite, but is the incarnation of divine beauty itself and the embodiment of His accessibility even in the world of sense-perception. Infinite Beauty enters into finite forms without losing His infinity and *Īs'varatva* to commune with the devotee that longs for His contact and to infinitize his aesthetic consciousness. Thus the sleeping beauty of *kṣīrābdhi*, the Ocean Pacific, reposing on infinity becomes the speaking beauty in the stone. Only those who have eyes can see the enchanting form, and only those who have ears can hear the divine song. The *Āḷvārs* with a genius for intuiting the *arcā* had a soul-sight of Beauty and their inspiring utterances are an invitation to humanity to share in the mystic rapture of such aesthetic communion.

The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* philosophy of art is ultimately founded on the idea that the beauty of Brahman leads to eternal bliss and the exposition of this truth brings out the vital relation between aesthetics or *Alaṅkāra S'āstra* and *Vēdānta*. In the synthetic philosophy of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, science and art are exhibited as a way of approach to *Brahmajñāna* and *Brahmānanda*. *Alaṅkāra S'āstra*, as aesthetic science, has its ultimate meaning in the artistic philosophy of Brahman as the Beautiful and the Blissful. Every aesthetic experience has its emotional content, though every emotion is not aesthetic; and the theory of *rasa* is a basic concept in Hindu art. While every living being or *jīva* is attracted by beauty, man alone knows that he has such responsiveness, and constructs an aesthetic philosophy. When the philosopher not only thinks of beauty but is moved by it, he becomes an

artist and poet. Beauty is an intuition-expression, and, without a medium or sensuous content, it loses its soul. Poetry holds the sceptre among the arts, spatial and temporal, owing to its affinity to mystic experience. The poet, with his divine vision, catches a glimpse of the beauty that never was in nature, and, by the magic of his words, communicates its inner charm to others. Literature as poetry or *kāvya* is word-magic, having a moving appeal and leading to immediate enjoyment. *Rasa* or spiritual exaltation is the very soul of poesy (*vākyam rasātmakam*) and is experienced by responsive minds, as aesthetic joy accompanies the contemplation of a *bhāva*. *Rasa* is the feel of a ruling aesthetic mood ; it is not, like taste, a physical joy, but is an inner spiritual enjoyment. It is an intuition with its own artistic expression. Each *rasa* is *sui generis* and a specific feeling tone having its own aesthetic necessity and value, and is not a response to an alien situation. Being self-creative, a *bhāva* involves the more of itself and its joy is fecundative. The immortal beauty of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is intuited and cannot be linguistically explained on account of its infinite suggestiveness, sweetness and inner grace. These qualities have an eternal appeal to the heart of humanity. The aesthetic moods are classified according to their feeling tone into nine types, namely, *bībhatsa* or disgust, *bhayānaka* or fear, *vīra* or heroism, *adbhuta* or the marvellous, *raudra* or the angry, *hāsya* or the humorous, *karuṇā* or the pathetic, *s'ānta* or the peaceful and *s'ṛṅgāra* or love. *S'ṛṅgāra rasa* is the queen of the *rasas*, and has supreme value in aesthetic religion.

Aesthetic religion utilizes the emotion of fear, anger, wonder and sex, and, by sublimating and spiritualizing them, removes their sensual content and directs them Godward.

This view avoids the perils of sensualistic hedonism and asceticism, and makes feeling furnish the dynamic element of the religious motive. Voluptuousness is the exhibition of feeling *in excelsis*, and asceticism is its inhibition *in excelsis*, and both are fatal to aesthetic religion. Though Freudian psycho-anlaysis in its application to religion is an education in ugliness or nastiness, it has a negative value inasmuch as it has laid bare the evils of the disease of abnormal repression. But aesthetic religion is founded on normal psychology; it recognizes the truth that the instincts can only be spiritualized and not destroyed. The *Bhāgavata*, in its inimitable way, funishes the *raison de etre* for the education of instinctive life, and offers hope even to the *āsuric* type like Kaṃsa and S'is'upāla. It declares that those who with devotion direct their sexual passion or *kāma*, hatred or *krōdha*, fear or *bhaya*, feeling of friendship or *snēha*, feeling of comradeship or *aikya* and love or *bhakti* (*sauhṛda*), ceaselessly to Hari, become one with Him and attain His likeness or *tanmaya*.[1] The evil in them is destroyed by Hari and their goodness leads to godliness. In the alchemy of Kṛṣṇa love, the blemish of every *jīva* is removed and the *jīva* is brahmanized. When the *bhāvas* are spiritualized, they become the essential factors of aesthetic religion. The vision of the cosmic form or *vis'varūpa* granted to Arjuna by the Lord is an instance of the sentiments of *bhayānaka*, *vīra*, *raudra* and *adbhuta* which are intrinsically spiritual. Arjuna was awe-struck by the vision of the formless form of Krṣṇa as *Īs'vara*, with its endless stretch of space and sweep of time, appearing as the world destroyer. The infinity and omnipotence of *Īs'vara*

[1] kāmaṃ krōdhaṃ bhayaṃ snēhamaikyam sauhṛdam ēva ca |
nityaṃ harau vidadhataḥ yānti tanmayatām hi tē ||

—*Bhāgavata*, X. xxix. 15.

contrasted with the impotence and the infinitesimal nature of the *jīva* as the atomic self, generate the feeling of one's own insignificance and arouse the sentiment of reverence. Cosmic aesthetic pleasure results from the experience of the incongruities of life, and is opposed to serious-mindedness and light-heartedness. Nammāḻvār enjoys the wonder of the self-contradictions of the world play or *viruddha vibhūti* of the *Māyin*[1] and seeks to laugh it away by trying to go beyond it. In the blending of the joy of the eternal realm and the tragic tension of the realm of *saṃsāra*, there results the aesthetic feeling that the cosmos has a comic touch. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is the epic of the reign of *karuṇā rasa*, and with consummate poetic genius, to which there is no parallel, the other *rasas* are harmoniously blended with *karuṇā* by the *ṛṣi* to arouse the mood of pity and develop it to perfection. *S'ṛṅgāra rasa* is the joy of seeking the beauty of sex and revelling in love as in the *S'ākuntala* and is regarded as the *rasa par excellence*, as it is the consummation of human love. Sex is the master device of nature to draw souls together, and cosmic creation is itself traced to the *sat* without a second realizing itself as the male and female principles of life. The science of erotics or *Kāma S'āstra* is an aesthetic education, which consists in changing the brute feeling into human love and bringing about the psycho-physical at-one-ment of two souls. The joy of *saṃs'leṣa* or the union of lovers is more than the logical satisfaction of the synthesis of opposites. The paradox of love lies in conquest by submission and the heightening of love by separation. Mystic idealism utilizes the fidelity and mutualness given in *s'ṛṅgāra rasa*, and elevates it to the level of the divine love of Rādhā and Āṇḍāḷ. It is not erotism but the fulfilment of divine love, and the love of S'rī Kṛṣṇa as *Manmatha-manmatha*

[1] Nammālvār, *Tiruvoymozhi*, VI. iii.

subdues Eros and turns the *viṣaya kāma* of the earth-bound selves into *Bhagavat kāma* of the *bhakta*, and *sṛṅgāra rasa* becomes *Brahmarasa* and *Brahmānanda*.

The attainment of bliss and the removal of sorrow are the end and aim of life ; but the nature of bliss and the means of securing it can be determined only by *Vēdāntic* aesthetics. To the materialistic and egoistic hedonist or *Cārvāka*, the highest good of life is the feeling of pleasure derived by the gratification of the cravings of the senses and of the animal appetite. What is pleasant or pleasurable for the moment has alone the greatest attraction. In a more moderate form, it is the pursuit of the pleasures of life as a whole under the guidance of prudence and these pleasures as different from the feeling of pleasure are the objects of sense presented to the *puruṣa* as desired ends or *viṣaya kāma*. But when the desire is not satisfied, there is disappointment followed by *krōdha* and mental confusion. Sense-pleasures are desired, no doubt, but they are not desirable, as they are fleeting and defective. Pleasure and pain always go together, and reflection on the hedonistic values of life breeds the mood of pessimism and sick-mindedness. Pleasures excite the mind and exhaust it ; they tickle us for the moment, and pass away the next moment. Even the pleasures of *Svarga* come and go, and they have no stability or inner value. Man finds satisfaction in the life of reason, aesthetic contemplation and altruistic service, and mental happiness is more valuable than the external pleasures derived from the objects of sense. More valuable than mental happiness is the spiritual joy of self-realization or *kaivalya*. The knowledge of *ātman* as contrasted with *prakṛti* is an inner joy, which is qualitatively different from the pleasures of hedonism. While the pleasures of

prakṛti are transient and trivial, the joy of self-knowledge or *kaivalya* is stable, and is an instance of *s'ānti*. But even this state is not the highest end, as it is ego-centric and may lapse into quietism. The value of *Bhagavat kāma* is higher than that of *ātma kama* and *viṣaya kāma*, and by intuiting the beauty of Brahman, the *ātman* is immersed in immortal bliss. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is the only religion that equates the absolute with the God of Beauty and Bliss and that may therefore be called aesthetic religion. In this regard, it is allied to mysticism, which may be explained as the spiritual yearning of the *jīva* for communion with its inner Self of Beauty and absorption in the ecstasy of such communion. The *Upaniṣad* pours out in unsurpassable poetry the beauty of this truth in the *Ānandavallī*, the *Bhūmavidyā* and the *Madhuvidyā*.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* says that all living beings are born in *ānanda*, live, move and have their being in *ānanda* and enter into it, and defines Brahman as *ānandamaya*.[1] The *S'ruti* employs a calculus of pleasures in an ascending scale of values, and ends with the highest bliss of Brahman. It is supreme and not to be surpassed, and cannot be adequately described and defined. The pleasures of the finite self ranging from earthly paradise to the perennial delights of Brahmā (as distinguished from Brahman) are tinged with pain, and pale into nothingness when compared to *Brahmānanda*. Though Brahman is the inner self of the *jīva*. it is not touched or tainted by its imperfections and is absolutely blessed. The term *ānandamaya* does not connote maximum pleasure, implying the presence of pain, as the concepts of quantity and causality are only empirical categories applicable

[1] ānandāddhyēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē I ānandēna jātāni jivanti I ānandam prayantyabhisaṃvis'aṇtīti II—*Taitt. Up.*, Bhṛguvallī, 6.

to the self of *saṃsāra*, and have no transcendental use. Besides, the *mantra* which defines Brahman as *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam* also defines it as abounding bliss and, in the light of the rule of coordination, the term *ānandamaya* connotes Brahman and not the *jīva*. The *Upaniṣad* " He who knows Brahman attains the highest "[1] distinguishes between the self that attains bliss and Brahman that is attained. Brahman, the cosmic self, is also the inner self of the *jīva*, and it finally imparts its bliss to it and brahmanizes it. The enjoyment of *Brahmarasa* by the freed self does not connote the absolute identity of the experiencing subject and the experienced object. The *Madhuvidyā* is also a *Brahmōpaniṣad*, as it explains the nectar of the sun extracted by the *devas* in a *Vēdic*[2] way as the bliss of Brahman that is the Light of lights and the inner Self of the sun. The self within the eye is Brahman the beautiful and the blissful[3]. He is called *vāmanīḥ* for He bestows all blessings, *bhāmanīḥ* for He is the *jyōtis* or splendour that shines in all the worlds. He is *ka* or pleasure and *kha*, the all-pervading infinite. In the exposition of the *Bhūmavidyā*, Rāmānuja, following the author of the *Sūtras* (I. iii. 7-8), concludes that Brahman is *bhūman* or infinite bliss. By intuiting Brahman the freed self intuits His *vibhūti* or *ais'varya*, where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else and knows nothing else.[4] There is nothing apart from

[1] Brahmavid āpnōti param | tad ēṣābhyuktā | satyam jñānam anantam brahma |—*Taitt. Up.*, Ānandavallī, 1.

[2] asau vā ādityō dēva madhu.—*Ch. Up.*, III. i. 1.

[3] ya ēṣōkṣiṇi puruṣō dṛs'yatē.ēṣa ātmēti hōvāca ētad amṛtam abhayam ētad brahma |—*Ch. Up.*, IV. xv. 1, ēṣa u ēva vāmanīḥ—IV. xv. 3. ēṣa u ēva bhāmanīh—IV. xv. 4, prāṇōbrahma kambrahma khambrahma . . . . yadvāvakam tadēvakham yadēva kham tadēvakamiti—IV. x. 5.

[4] yatra nānyatpayati nānyat s'ṛṇōti nānyad vijānāti sa bhūmaḥ atha yatrānyat pas'yati anyat s'ṛṇōti anyat vijānāti tadalpam yō vai bhūmā tad amṛtam |— *Ch. Up.*, VII. xxiv. 1.

sa ēva adhastāt sa upariṣṭāt sa pas'cāt sa purastāt sa dakṣiṇataḥ sa uttarataḥ sa ēvēdam sarvam iti |—*Ch. Up.*, VII. xxv. 1.

Brahman, and the mystic who rejoices in the self and revels in it, sees everything with the eye of Brahman, and obtains everything everywhere. Pleasure is what is agreeable to man, and pain is what is disagreeable to him. To a patient suffering from excessive bile, drinking water which is pure and agreeable is not pleasant; but to the healthy man it is wholesome and pleasant. In the same way the *jīva* suffering from *avidyā-karma* views the world as distinct from Brahman and subjects himself to the ills of *saṃsāra*. But the *mukta* freed from *avidyā-karma* intuits the same world as the *ais'varya* of Brahman, and feels no pain or sorrow at all. The intuition of Brahman as the All-Self leads to infinite and immortal bliss. The author of the *Sūtras* following *S'ruti* thus concludes that the term *ānandamaya* refers to Brahman and not to the *jīva* or *pradhāna* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* with its genius for coordination and harmonizing apparent contradictions accepts the *Sūtras* and the *S'ruti* and affirms that the absolute as the *sat* without a second is *ānandamaya* without any shadow of imperfection, and is the Highest Self.

The *Advaitin* also follows the same line of reasoning and comes to the same conclusion, but his pet theory of *Māyāvāda* overpowers his aesthetic inclinations; and he suddenly arrests with his destructive dialectics the free flow of aesthetic intuition. He concludes the *adhikaraṇa* by saying that the self consisting of bliss is the highest self and then springs a surprise by contradicting it. The term *ānandamaya* has a false meaning and a true meaning. The text seems to have a context, but it has really a relative value alone as the absolute is not limited logically and linguistically. From the point of view of the author of the *Sūtras*, Brahman is *ānandamaya* but, on the grounds of

Māyāvāda, the concept of *ānandamaya* involves the self-contradiction of *māyā*, and has to be rejected for three reasons. The whole topic refers to the absolute beyond the appearances, when it lays down the truth: *yatōvācō nivartantē aprāpya manasā saha*. The nature of Brahman cannot be described or defined, because reality is beyond all relational thought. Thought is self-discrepant, as it claims to know reality, but fails in its attempt. It appears to be real, but is not real. Every act of predication is, therefore, ultimately futile and false, and is shipwrecked in its entrance to the harbour of reality. The term *ānandamaya* seeks to define the nature of Brahman by attributing to Brahman the quality of *ānanda*. But Brahman is beyond all ideas of predication, and therefore the definition is futile and should be rejected. Secondly, the term *ānandamaya* cannot refer to Brahman as the suffix *maya* implies modification or *vikāra* as in the case of *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya* and *manōmaya*. Whatever is made or modified is an effect and, is imperfect, and, if Brahman is *ānandamaya*, or made of bliss, it is defective. The concept of causality does not adequately expound the nature of the absolute. It is therefore held by the *Advaitin* that determination is negation. Brahman as the infinite is the not-finite, and the quality of *ānandamaya* is a limiting concept, which cannot be ascribed to Brahman. The symbology employed in the whole topic is to be contrasted with the metaphysical exposition of the absolute. Thirdly, even if the suffix *maya* connotes not *vikāra*, but *prācurya* as stated in the *Sūtra* I. i. 14, it implies maximum bliss with minimum pain and the moment we think the absolute, we give it an empirical dress and finitize it. The topic thus conveys a knowledge of the absolute or *nirguṇa* Brahman and the concept of *ānandamaya* intimates the nature of *savis'ēṣa* Brahman. The absolute is

the intuitional highest and is *ānanda*, but *Is'vara* is *ānandamaya*, the logical highest or the highest conceptual reading of the absolute.

Bhāskara's criticism of the theory of two Brahmans is violent, as he condemns it as a case of *s'ruticide* or *s'rutihāni* (sacrifice of scripture) and *as'rutakalpana* or mere fabrication. The *Upaniṣad* follows the *a priori* road that the knower of Brahman attains the highest and repudiates the agnostic view that the absolute transcends relational thought. The *Brahma Sūtras* would be stultified if thought could not reach reality, and the 'That' is beyond the 'What.' It is the first principle of philosophy that Brahman can be apprehended by the mind purified by meditating on Brahman and not by the impure in heart. When consciousness is freed from the effect of *karma*, it can intuit the infinite. The term *ānandamaya* refers to the blissfulness of Brahman and not to the absolute identity between Brahman and bliss. *Nirguṇa* Brahman is bare being without any positive content, and therefore the bliss of Brahman is not the bliss that is Brahman. If predication is a perversion of reality and not its affirmation, the result is scepticism and there will be no theory of bliss at all. *Ānanda* in the state of *mukti* is the fulness of bliss and *mukti* is not the negation of sorrow as the *Vais'eṣika* says. The third view that the abundance of bliss implies the co-existence of pain is countered by the argument that the topic adopts a calculus to prove that the bliss of Brahman is the highest in the scale and not the absolute beyond thought. Just as lamp light fades into nothing in the presence of sun light, the pleasures of life are as nothing compared to the ecstasy of *Brahmānubhava* or the experience of Brahman. It is the contention of some *Advaitic* aestheticians

that just as white light is refracted and stained, the absolute bliss that is Brahman acquires the colour of *saguṇa* Brahman. This view is untenable because the absolute can never be reflected or refracted. Besides, aesthetics cannot fit into *Advaita* and a consistent *Advaitin* has to reject the ultimacy of aesthetic values, in the same way in which he rejects those of ethics and religion. If the white light of *rasa* or bliss is refracted by *avidyā* and becomes aesthetic joy, then aesthetics ceases to have any value, and there would be no theory of *rasa* at all. Vēdānta Dēs'ika turns the tables when he refers to the awakening of *bhakti* as *saṅkalpa sūryōdaya* and contrasts it with the rise of *Advaitic* consciousness as *prabōdha candrōdaya* or moony effulgence. Analogy apart, it is inconceivable that bliss can experience itself. Though the lover and the beloved become one and are lost in bliss, there is only coalescence of content and not identity. The experients are different though the experience is non-dual.

The philosophy of aesthetics is as valid as metaphysics and ethical thought, for it is the enquiry into the nature of Brahman as the beautiful and the blissful. As a speculative philosophy, it affords a new insight into the realistic and idealistic aspects of beauty, and synthesizes its formal and material character. As *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* aesthetics, it defines Brahman as *bhuvana sundara* and *Manmatha-manmatha* and identifies cosmic beauty with the inner beauty of the self. It then expounds the five beautiful forms of Brahman and the different kinds of *rasas* giving the highest value to *s'ṛṅgāra rasa* in its spiritualized aspect. Beauty leads to bliss. After controverting the *nirguṇa* theory, it insists on the aesthetic definition of Brahman as *bhuvana sundara* and *ānandamaya* and concludes that the absolute of metaphysics is the

ānandamaya of the philosophy of art. *Viśiṣṭādvaita* is thus the only philosophy of religion that recognizes the eternal value of beauty and defines Brahman as the beautiful and the blissful.

CHAPTER IX

ONTOLOGY VI: BRAHMAN AS THE *S'ARĪRIN*

THE analysis of the metaphysical, ethical and aesthetic sides of spiritual experience in terms of *ādhēyatva*, *vidhēyatva* and *s'ēṣatva* dissects the integral intuition of Brahman into bloodless categories, and it is the task of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a true synthetic view of experience to co-ordinate the values of truth, goodness and beauty and restore their living unity. The metaphysical problem "what is that by knowing which everything else is known ?" is solved by the definition of Brahman as the ground of the universe and as the *ādhēya* or source and centre of the universe. This definition insists on the divine immanence of the universe of *cit* and *acit* and Brahman as the Being of our being, the True of the true, the Light of lights and the Eternal of eternals. It states further that Brahman is in nature but is not nature, as held by naturalistic pantheism. Brahman is in the self but is not the self as viewed by the monists. All things live, move and have their being in Brahman. They draw their substantiality from it. It is their *svarūpās'raya*. But Brahman is not affected by the changes of nature of the imperfections of the *jīva*. The absolute of ontology as the *sat* without a second is the truth that God alone is the Real.

But it is not bare being or the 'That' without the 'what,' a unit among other units, or a systematic unity; it is real reality which communicates its life to *cit* and *acit*. The absolute is not only the Being of being, but is the super-subject that is the *prius* and presupposition of predication and the ultimate reason of things, the universal which, while giving meaning to the universe, exceeds its content. The true Subject does not sublate thought but is its ultimate source. It is the true Infinite different from the mathematical infinite of quantity; and, from the cosmological point of view, it enters with the finite self as its *s'arīra* into nature, evolves names and forms and thus becomes the cosmic ground. The cause or *upādāna* itself becomes the effect or *upādēya*. The infinite is in the finite without losing its infiniteness. In this way, epistemology, ontology and cosmology as branches of metaphysics determine the nature of Brahman as absolute truth and consciousness and as the world-ground. The metaphysician who seeks Brahman ascends to the heights of the *Upaniṣad* and views Brahman as the immanent unity and indwelling reason of all things, the *sat* or substance that exists *per se*, the *jyōtis* or Self that is the thinker of thinkers, and the absolute or Supreme Being. Metaphysics is the food of thought but, in its zeal for abstraction and dialectic analysis, it often misses its true spirit and gives stone instead of bread. The intellect is justified in its desire to know Brahman (*Brahmajijñāsā*), but it becomes dry-as-dust intellectualism if it leads to mere dialectics or logic chopping and theological sophistry.

The logico-mathematical method tends to depersonalize the self and deprive it of its moral value. Brahman is not only the immanent, but is also the transcendental, cause of the

world. The idea of mere divine immanence, as held by pantheists, commits itself to the perils of the theory of Brahman evolving into the cosmos (*Brahma pariṇāmavāda*) and the follies of the pantheist's identification of Brahman with the world of evil and sin. It paralyses moral consciousness. This defect is overcome by voluntarism or the theory of God as the author of all good which exalts the ethical eminence of Brahman as *niyantā* and the righteousness of *Īs'vara* as the moral ruler of the world who dispenses justice according to the *karma* of the *jīva*. This view stresses the primacy of Practical Reason or the absoluteness of moral consciousness and transforms the metaphysical view of the absolute as the whole into the view of the Holy One of ethical religion. Ethical idealism marks the transition from the idea of Brahman as pure Being into that of Brahman as *Īs'vara* or *niyantā* and may be termed theistic monism. The universe is a realm of righteousness, and divine justice functions through the moral freedom of the finite self. The idea of *Īs'vara* as righteous Ruler and Redeemer corrects the extremes of fatalism and determinism due to divine will. The moral self realizes its freedom by subduing the self of *ahaṅkāra*, attunes its will to that of *Īs'vara* and views every act of *karma* as *kaiṅkarya*. The *jīva* not only derives its substantiality from Brahman (*s'varūpās'raya*) but also depends entirely on His redemptive will (*saṅkalpās'raya*) and exists wholly for His satisfaction ; this view steers clear of the pitfalls of pantheism and pluralism. The omnipotence of *Īs'vara* is self-limited by His redemptive love, working through the moral law of *karma*, in the history of humanity. The infinite love of God is eternally wedded to the majesty of His law in the dual personality of *S'rīman* Nārāyaṇa and enters into history in the interests of universal redemption. The *jīva* realizing its absolute dependence on the Lord and *S'rī* freely dedicates

itself to divine service. This self-surrender enriches the consciousness of freedom instead of enslaving it. Ethical idealism or monism has the merit of establishing the unity of finite endeavour and the supreme end and of viewing the *s'ēṣi* as both *upāya* and *upēya*; its idea of the Holy One arouses the numinous sense of *Īs'vara* as the inspirer of awe revealed in His *vis'varūpa dars'ana* to Arjuna and ethical idealism instils reverence rather than love. It exalts will at the expense of feeling and presents a truncated view of philosophy. Its ideal of a theocracy, in which the good or the *sāttvikas* are saved and the wicked who are *tāmasic* are hurled into hell, may satisfy theistic rigour, but not the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* doctrine of universal redemption. Aesthetic philosophy, on the other hand, insists on the primacy of feeling, and transforms the *niyantā* into the *bhuvana sundara*, the supremely Beautiful, whose transcendent beauty shines as the inner beauty of the self with a view to ravishing it out of its fleshly feeling. The Lord with His unsurpassed and enchanting beauty is also the blissful, and, when the self is beautified, it sheds its egoistic self-satisfaction and forgets itself in the bliss of Brahman or *Brahma rasa*. But aesthetics by itself has a tendency to encourage sentimentalism, which is fatal to philosophic disinterestedness and discipline, and has to be coordinated with ethics and metaphysics.

Vis'iṣṭādvaitā as a true philosophy of religion corrects the one-sidedness of metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics and coordinates them into a synthetic unity. Mere intellectualism, voluntarism or emotionalism is but a fragment of philosophy and it is only by the thinking together of all the sides of experience that philosophy can be reconstructed and

regarded as a synoptic view. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* satisfies this supreme test of comprehensiveness by gathering together the concepts employed by metaphysics, morals and aesthetics and discovering the fundamental truth that underlies them. Brahman, the subject of *Vēdāntic* enquiry, is also, according to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, the goal of the spiritual quest. *Brahmajijñāsa* and the apprehension of Brahman are followed by the attainment of the eternal values of the experience of beauty, goodness and truth and their conservation in the divine content. The philosopher who thinks God's thoughts after Him sums up the ultimate values of life in terms of cognition, conation and feeling and these are not merely subjective experiences, but are objective factors that constitute the determining qualities of Brahman itself. They are appreciated as divine qualities revealing the character of God. *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* metaphysics, as an intellectual quest, defines Brahman as *satyam*, *jñānam* and *anantam*; its ethics is based on the idea of *amalatva* and its aesthetics, on *ānanda*. These five qualities may be grouped under the ideas of Brahman as *ādhāra*, *niyantā s'ēṣī* and *sundara*. The finite is rooted in the infinite, is sustained and controlled by it and exists for its satisfaction. Brahman is the metaphysical ground of the world of *cit* and *acit*, the inner ruler of the finite self and the goal of life. The key thought of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* which reveals this inner relation between Brahman and the world of *acit* and *cit* is known as *s'arīra-s'arīri bhāva*. It is regarded as the differentia of the whole system (its *pradhānapratitantra*). *Vēdānta* is for this reason known as the *S'ārīraka S'āstra*. It is this central idea that serves as the fulcrum of the philosophy of Rāmānuja, and it alone satisfies all the *pramāṇas*. It solves the riddles of thought and dispels the ills of life. It alone is philosophically

satisfactory as it fulfils the claims of the *samanvaya* method. It is spiritually satisfying as it alone harmonizes the apparent discords of the scriptural texts. The supreme test of a philosophy lies in its simplicity and suggestiveness and the idea of Brahman as *sarva-s'arīrin*, the Self whose body is the universe, eminently conforms to this acid test. An attempt is made in this chapter to sum up the arguments developed in the *four* preceding chapters dealing with the three concepts of *ādhēya*, *vidhēya* and *s'ēṣa* and present them as distinguishable features of the term *s'arīra* in order to define the exact meaning and value of the relation between the *s'arīra* and the *s'arīrin*.

The concept of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* and the world as the *s'arīra* strikes the keynote of the ontology of Rāmānuja as revealed in the *Sadvidyā* and developed by the *satkārya-vāda* which is often wrongly identified with western realism. The *Sadvidyā* states the classical truth of *Vēdānta* that Brahman is real Reality by knowing which everything else is known. Brahman is self-proved and it can be known because it is real. It is not true to say that it is real because it can be known. It is not only self-revelatory but is also the Inner Self of all beings. It enters into the world of *acit* along with the finite selves and evolves into the names and forms that constitute the world of space-time. The universe is rooted in the True and rests in the True, and knowledge is not a passage from falsity to reality but from reality to more and more reality. Because Brahman is real, the world, which is not different from it as it is its effect or *upādēya*, is also real and shares its constraining character ; this view is entirely different from pan-illusionism and acosmism which affirm the reality and self-identity of Brahman by denying the reality of the world order. There is a world of difference between the

Vis'iṣṭādvaitic affirmation that the finite is real because it is rooted in the infinite and pulsates with its life and the *Advaitic* negation that the finite is a fictitious imagining of the absolute due to the distorting and pluralizing power of *avidyā.* If Brahman is mere indeterminate consciousness (*nir-viṣēsa cinmātra*) and the world is a baseless fabrication of *māyā*, then *Is'vara*, the first figment of cosmic nescience or *avidyā*, is unreal; the *jīva*, the reflection of the absolute in *avidyā*, is unreal; every social relation is a magic show; *s'āstraic* omniscience is only the product of nescience on a cosmic scale; and metaphysics itself is a mere make-believe. The only way of avoiding this scepticism and nihilism is the acceptance of the theory of the divine nature of reality and of the immanence of Brahman, without the pan-cosmic identification of the cosmos with God. Vāsudēva is the All-Self that pervades the universe as *paramākās'a* without being affected by its imperfections. The *sat* or the absolute in the *praḷaya* state contains the real possibility of *cit* and *acit* in *posse*, but without any distinction or differentiation; and *sṛṣṭi* is the self-differentiation of the absolute in which the possible becomes the actual. The One without a second wills to be the many and differentiates itself into the pluralistic universe; this self-differentiation is not an act of self-deception or false predication but the process of self-revelation. Brahman enters into the world of matter with the *jīva* as its *s'arīra*, vivifies it and evolves into the heterogenous world of space-time. Brahman with *cit-acit* as its *s'arīra* in the undifferentiated (*avibhakta*) state becomes Brahman with *cit-acit* as the *s'arīra* in the effect state of differentiation (*vibhakta*). Since the effect is cause in another form and non-different from it, by knowing Brahman or *natura naturans*, the world order as

natura naturata is likewise known. The world is false only if it is viewed as separate from Brahman. This view repudiates the *asatkāryavāda* of the *Vais'ēṣika* which regards the effect or *kārya* as *asat* or non-existent before it is produced and explains the world as creation out of nothing; the monistic theory which affirms the reality of Brahman and the unreality of the causal relation, the *Mādhyamika* contention that both cause and effect are unreal; and also the *satkāryavāda* of the *Sāṅkhya* which traces the reality of the world order to *pradhāna*. On the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* view *prakṛti* is real, though, as *asat*, it is liable to change in the process of *pariṇāma*, and the *ātman* is *sat* as it can shine by itself though its *jñāna* is subject to the imperfections of *karma*. No fact of experience is an illusion, and even illusion itself as a psychic occurrence is a fact of experience. Even dreams are moral experiences though they have only a subjective and transient value. Thus every experience has Reality as its subject and is therefore real. The ultimate Reality is Brahman which pervades all beings as the *Paramātman*. The universe is big with Brahman or instinct with divinity though only a Prahlāda with the eye of Brahman can discover it.

The ontological realism of Rāmānuja enables him to utilize the grammatical rule of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* in the further exposition of the *s'arīra-s'arīri* relation between the world and Brahman. It conveys the idea of one thing being equally qualified by several attributes each of which has its own distinctive meaning and motive and embodies the unity of difference.[1] If the import of a proposition were bare or abstract unity it would be meaningless. Every proposition, secular or *Vēdic*, predicates a quality or qualities of a subject in reality and

[1] S. *B.*, I. i. also I. i. 13, p. 181. (*Vide*, p. 38).

is therefore significant. The meaning is gathered by reference to the context, convention and relevance. Every term as such has meaning only when it is functionally related to other terms in living language, and language is itself a system of meanings due to the operative identity that pervades differences. The ultimate subject of language which ensouls it is Brahman itself. In the term 'blue lotus,' the adjective qualifies the noun and there is no discrepancy between the two words just as there is no contradiction between a man and his ear-ring or between the yellow colour of the orange and its sweet taste. The proposition 'This is that Devadatta' reveals the primary meaning of his personal identity and states that Devadatta in this spatial and temporal environment and context is the same Devadatta that was referred to in a former context. The two words 'thou' and 'that' in the text 'Thou art that' have their specific and direct meaning (*mukhyavṛtti*) and connote different attributes of the same reality. To say that the text means absolute identity by the elimination of spatial and temporal differences is meaningless tautology. To say that the text 'Thou art that' affirms the identity of the *jīva* and *Īs'vara* by eliminating their self-contradictions has no meaning in philosophy, nor has it any religious value. While co-ordination enriches the meaning, sublation destroys it. But the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* interpretation of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* frees it from the pitfalls of monism, pluralism and *bhēdābhēda*. The monistic view that it refers to unity devoid of difference is as unthinkable as the pluralistic view that several terms have several meanings which cannot be unified. The *bhēdābhēda* theory that identity and difference are both aspects of reality is self-contradictory. The true meaning of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* is that the same thing can be qualified by several attributes, each of which has its own meaning and content. They can co-exist in peace side by side

in the same thing without suffering from self-contradiction and seeking self-extinction. This truth is eminently applicable to the *Vēdāntic* knowledge of the relation between Brahman and the world in terms of *s'arīrin* and *s'arīra*. The determining qualities of Brahman like *satyam*, *jñānam*, and *anantam* bring to light its infinite perfections and it is idle to say that such predication is a perversion of reality. If Brahman were identified with itself there would be no point or purpose in enquiring into its nature, as such enquiry would itself be self-discrepant and suicidal. The cosmological truth that Brahman as *upādāna kāraṇa* is also Brahman as *upādēya* falls into line with the law of co-ordination and there is no self-discrepancy between the two states, just as there is no self-discrepancy between the childhood of a person and his youth. The pantheistic affirmation that the world is He, brings out the all-pervasive nature of Brahman as the inner self or *s'arīrin* of all beings. Lastly the text 'Thou art that' refers directly to co-ordination and non-contradiction as it reveals the self-identity of Brahman existing in the objective and subjective forms. It states the truth that the cosmic self connoted by 'That' is the same as the inner self or *s'arīrin* of the *jīva* connected with the body connoted by the term 'Thou,' and stresses the inner intimacy between *Paramātman*, the Supreme Self, and *jīvātman*, the individual self. There is no point in sacrificing the direct meaning and resorting to *lakṣaṇā* or indirect designation. The text in that case is torn from the context and becomes mere pretext.

The rule of *sāmānādhikaraṇya* as the grammar of *Vēdāntic* thought enables us to understand the epistemological exposition that the world of matter and souls is the *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* of Brahman. The problem of the

relation between *guṇa* and *guṇī* is a crucial test for deciding the rival claims of *Advaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. The *Advaitic* view of *nirguṇa* Brahman as *nirvis'ēṣa cinmātra* or indeterminate consciousness is mainly a philosophy of negation, as its interest lies in affirming the reality of *saguṇa* Brahman as a religious necessity with a view to demolishing it dialectically by subsequent *jñāna* and declaring its philosophic futility. But *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is an 'yes' philosophy as it affirms everything and denies nothing, owing to its insistence on the self-revelation of Brahman in the universe as its all-sustaining soul. Determination is not negation, as negation itself is determination and has positive meaning. That the *sat* in the *Sadvidyā* is *savis'ēṣa* and not *nirvis'ēṣa* is proved by the fact of creation as the self-differentiation of the absolute, by its consistency with the grammatical rule of co-ordination and the requirements of the *pramāṇas* and by its coherence with the *Mīmāṃsā* rule of the unity of the beginning and the end of a topic. What is called *nirguṇa* Brahman in philosophic thought is itself *saguṇa*, as pure consciousness emptied of content is the hypostatization of an abstraction. 'To be intelligent' means 'to have the quality of intelligence' as there can be no *vis'ēṣaṇa* without a *vis'ēṣya*. The absolute as contentless consciousness approximates to the unconscious. The judgment 'The lotus is blue' refers to the substance or *vis'iṣṭa*, namely, the lotus, having the quality or *vis'ēṣaṇa* of blueness and the predication of an ideal content to a subject in reality. Reality or *vis'iṣṭa* is the organic unity of the *vis'ēṣaṇa-vis'ēṣya* relation and the two are distinguishable but not divisible. The unity of Brahman and the world as *vis'ēṣya* and *vis'ēṣaṇa* is *vis'iṣṭa aikya* and not *svarūpa aikya*. The Buddhistic view of quality without substance is countered by the monistic view of substance without qualities and these

extremes find their reconciliation in the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* theory of the world as the *vis'ēṣaṇa* of Brahman. In the judgment 'He is a *daṇḍin* or staff-bearer,' the predicate 'holding the staff' is what is called 'separable accidens' as the staff can exist by itself apart from the staff-bearer; but in the judgment 'Man is rational,' the quality is the differentia of the subject. As the attribute cannot be apprehended apart from the subject, of which it is the distinguishing attribute, it is called its *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa*. The genus or *jāti* is vitally related to the individual or *vyakti* and the *guṇa* or quality is embodied in the *guṇī*, its subject. Terms denoting *jāti* and *guṇa* denote also *vyakti* and *guṇī* according to the rule of co-ordination. "Whenever a thing (whether species, or quality, or substance) has existence as a mode only—owing to its proof, existence and conception being inseparably connected with something else—the words denoting it enter into co-ordination with other words denoting the same substance as characterized by other attributes."[1]

The reals that constitute the world are not unrelated or isolated bits, but are inter-related and related to the whole of reality. Every judgment, scriptural or secular, is an attribute of Brahman which is the ultimate Reality. The *jīva* is related to Brahman as its *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* like the light of a luminous body, the fragrance of a flower and the body of the self. The distinguishing self-consciousness (*dharmabhūtajñāna*) is different from the self or *dharmi* distinguished by it and yet the two are non-different in the sense that the essential attribute of a subject cannot exist apart from the subject. The

[1] *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 228.

non-sentient world is likewise an *aṃs'a* or attribute of Brahman as it cannot be apprehended apart from Brahman. Brahman is thus the *vis'ēsya* and matter and self are the *vis'ēṣaṇa*, and the *vis'ēṣya* is *nirvikāra* and is not affected by the imprefections of the *vis'ēṣaṇa*.

The *jīva* is a *prakāra* of Brahman which is therefore called the *prakārin*. In the judgment 'this is such'[1] the predicate 'such' is inseparably related to the 'this' which is given, finds its accomplishment in it, and is therefore called its *niyamēna prakāra*. One thing is called the *prakāra* of another if it cannot subsist by itself without its substrate or sustaining life and final cause or *prayōjana*. Like *jāti* and *guṇa*, a *dravya* or substance may be regarded as the determining attribute of another in so far as it is its mode.[2] The body is the mode of the embodied self and a word connoting a mode has its functioning and fruition in the self of which it is the mode and therefore connotes the self. The body of a *dēva*, man or animal is the mode of the self which sustains it and uses it for its own satisfaction. Words connoting these physical bodies of the *jīvas* connote also the *jīvas* to which the bodies belong.[3] Likewise words connoting *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* also connote *Paramātman* or the Highest Self of which they are the *prakāras*.[4] The body is a mode of the self and the self is a mode of the Highest Self.[5]

[1] *S. B.*, I. i. 13, p. 187 & *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 227.

[2] *S. B.*, I. i. i. p. 97 & *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 135.

[3] s'arīrasya s'arīriṇām prati prakāratvāt prakāravācinām ca s'abdānām prakāriṇyēva paryavasānāt s'arīravācinām s'abdānām s'arīriparyavasānam nyāyyam.—*S. B.*, I. i. 13. p. 187.

[4] prakṛtipuruṣavācinas' s'abdāḥ tatprakāraviṣṭatayā avasthitē paramātmani mukhyatayā vartantē, jīvātmavāci dēvamanuṣyādi s'abdavat.—*Vēdārtha Saṅgraha* (Vasudevachariar's edition), p. 205.

[5] *S. B.*, I. i. i. p. 99 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 138.

Thus all sentient and non-sentient beings are the self-differentiations or modes of the absolute, as they are derived from it and depend on it for their form and function. Brahman, with its energizing creative will, enters into the aggregate of matter, with the finite self as its *s'arīra*, and as their informing spirit, becomes *sat* and *tyat* or self and material things and thus evolves into the heterogeneity of names and forms which make up the universe.[1] All words therefore ultimately refer to the *Paramātman* with its modal modification of *cit* and *acit*. On the principle of co-ordination, it follows that the Self or *prakārin* is one though the *prakāras* or *cit* and *acit* are many. That the self is their substrate and supreme end is well brought out by the *Vākyakāra* as well.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita is, however, not to be misconstrued as the adjectival theory of the absolute, as it resembles it only in non-essentials. The finite self has not only an adjectival, but also a substantive, mode of being. Matter and self are the adjectives of the absolute only in the sense that the attribute cannot be known apart from its substance or subject. The self has substantive being in the sense that it is different from the absolute, as it is itself a centre of experience. If it is mere *vis'ēṣaṇa*, the world of souls would be a sum of adjectives housed in the absolute. But an infinity of universals cannot constitute the universe with its infinite wealth of individual experience. Brahman is the *vis'ēṣya* or *prakārin* and the world is the *vis'ēṣaṇa* or *prakāra* and the two are indissolubly blended as the self and its body. Brahman with

[1] sēyam dēvataikṣata hantāham imāstisrō dēvatā anēna jīvēnātmanā anupravis'ya nāmarūpē vyākaravāṇīti ||—*Ch. Up.*, VI. iii. 2.

sō, kāmayata | bahusyām prajāyēyēti | satapōtapyata | satapas taptvā | idam sarvam asṛjata | yad idam kiñca | tat sṛṣṭvā | tadēvānuprāvis'at | tad anupravis'ya | sacca tyaccābhavat | niruktamcāniruktamca |—*Taitt.* Ānandavallī, VI.

the attributes of *cit* and *acit* in the gross state of *sṛṣṭi* is the same as Brahman with the attributes of *cit* and *acit* in the *pralaya* state, owing to the principle of non-difference of cause and effect and of the unity of co-ordination. This does not mean the pantheistic identity of Brahman and the world like the unity of the snake and its coils nor the absolute that includes *Īs'vara, cit* and *acit*. The self as *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* has both modal dependence and monadic uniqueness. This view mediates between the pluralistic theory of self-subsistent and atomic reals and the monistic theory of the absolute as the substance that exists in and by itself without any determination. By knowing Brahman, the *vis'ēṣya* or *prakārin,* every *vis'ēṣaṇa* or *prakāra* that constitutes the universe is known. Brahman is *nirguṇa* only in the sense that it is the abode of all blessed qualities as contrasted with the changing world and the *karma*-ridden *jīva* distinguished by evil as well. The view that the world of *cit-acit* is the *prakāra* of Brahman, the *prakārin*, is deduced from the ultimate truth of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* and the world as the *s'arīra.*

The idea of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* furnishes the key to the understanding of *Vēdānta* and is deduced from the *S'ruti*, the source of spiritual knowledge, and the systematically organized *Sūtras* which are therefore called the *S'ārīraka S'āstra* or what is called the philosophy of pan-organismal monism. The scriptural texts are not divergent and self-discrepant but are dominated by the one and only aim of enabling the *mumukṣu* to apprehend Brahman and attain its eternal bliss. The truths of revelation are impersonal (*apauruṣēya*) and infallible and they can be verified by intuitive experience and thus rationally justified. The *Upaniṣads*

are not guesses at God nor even the inductions of individual seers or *ṛṣis*, but are a body of objective spiritual truths which the *ṛṣi* intuits and the philosopher renders intelligible to the discursive understanding with the aid of perceptual evidence. The *Upaniṣads* have the consistency of intuition as well as of logic, and the real, as it is in itself, is the real revealed to thought and realized in spiritual experience. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* philosopher with his loyalty to truth in all its levels finds no need to strain the texts to support his position. With his genius for synthetic knowledge, he intuits the *s'arīra-s'arīri* relation as the central truth of *Vēdānta*. By knowing Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of all beings, everything is known. It is the thread or *sūtra* that binds plurality into unity, reconciles the apparent contradictions and confusions in the scriptural texts and secular experience. It solves the riddles of reason and dispels the sorrows of *saṃsāra*. The *Sadvidyā*, (*Ch. Up.*, VI) brings out the inner unity between Brahman and the *jīva* by the similes of salt dissolved in water, honey gathered from different juices, the rivers merging into the sea, the seed and the tree, and the sap of the tree. Just as the branches and leaves of the tree draw their sustenance from the life of the whole tree, the universe pulsates with the life of the All-Self. But it is the *Antaryāmividyā* (Ch. III, vii of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakōpaniṣad*) that reveals explicitly the truth of the *s'arīra-s'arīri* relation and it is extolled by Rāmānuja as the *ghaṭaka s'ruti* that reconciles the extremes of pluralism and monism and satisfies the highest demands of life in all its aspects. The seer, Yājñavalkya, who is a *Brahmavādin*, tells Gautama that he knows Brahman and defines His nature in the immortal words of the *Vidyā*. The section refers to Brahman as the *antaryāmin* and *amṛta*, the indwelling immortal self

that abides in all beings as their *antaryāmin* and rules them from within. Definition and division complete the meaning of a term in intent and extent and in defining the essential nature of Brahman as the *s'arīrin*, the *Vidyā* also makes an exhaustive division of the kinds of beings that form its *s'arīra* and starting from the elements that constitute the objective world of space-time, it ends with the subjective world of the *jīva* or *vijñāna* which is the subject of all knowledge. The central teaching of the whole section is enshrined in the last *mantra*.[1] He, who dwells in the *jīva* and with the *jīva*, whom the *jīva* does not know, whose body the *jīva* is, and who rules it from within, He is the Self, the Inner Ruler immortal. He is unseen, unheard, unperceived, and unknown; but sees, hears, perceives, and knows, not like any of us with the help of the senses but directly without their help. There is no other seer like Him, no other hearer like Him, no other perceiver like Him, and no other knower like Him. Everything else is of evil.[2] The objects of sense and the living beings are not self-existent and self-maintained but spring from Brahman, are sustained by its pulsating life and exist for its satisfaction. This *mantra* is, as it were, the *mahāvākya* of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* in the sense that the universe has its meaning and motive only in Brahman as the Life of its life and the Lord of the lords of experience without the imperfections of the *s'arīra*.

The exact definition of the *s'arīra-s'arīri* relation may now be attempted. The knowledge of the ontology of *satkāryavāḍa*, of

[1] ya ātmani tiṣṭhan ātmanō antarah yam ātmā na vēda yasyātmā s'arīram ya ātmānam antarō yamayati sa ta ātmā antaryāmyamṛtaḥ,—*Bṛ. Up.*, III. vii. 22.

[2] adṛṣṭō draṣṭā as'rutas' s'rōta amatō mantā avijñātō vijñātā nānyotōsti draṣṭā nānynōtōsti s'rōtā nānyōtōsti mantā nānyōtōsti vijñātā ēṣa ta ātmāntaryāmyamṛtaḥ atōnyadārtam.—*Bṛ. Up.*, III, vii, 23.

the grammatical rule of *sāmānādhikaranya*, of the epistemology of *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* and of the importance of the *ghaṭaka s'rutiṣ* is presupposed in the understanding of this *bhāva*, and the preceding sections were devoted to the exposition of these truths. Really they are interrelated and form a single theme though they were logically distinguished and studied as separate truths. The definition of this *bhāva* also presupposes a knowledge of the logical definition of the meaning of the term *s'arīrin*. In ordinary language the word *s'arīra* does not, like the word 'jar,' denote a thing of a definite character, but applies to beings of entirely different make like worms, insects, moths, snakes, quadrupeds and men. In the *Vēda*, the term *s'arīra* is classified into higher and lower types on the principle of duration. The body of *Īs'vara*, *s'uddhasattva*, time and the self, are eternal while the ephemeral *s'arīra* is either created for the *ātman* or made by *karma*. The created bodies of the Lord and the eternals (*nityasūris*) belong to the former class, while the latter are sub-divided into bodies which are both volitional and *karma*-made. The *karma*-made are further classified into the immovables like trees and shrubs and movables like *dēvas*, human beings, and animals. On the principle of division according to genesis, the beings are seed-born (*udbhi-ja*), sweat-born (*sveda-ja*), egg-born (*aṇḍa-ja*) and womb-born (*jarāyu-ja*) and there are also *s'arīras* not produced in this way. In the case of bodies that are injured or paralysed, there is no actual control and coordination ; but the power of control is only obstructed for the time being and not destroyed. The above classification includes (1) the physical bodies that are perceived by the senses and traced to biological conditions, (2) the subtle bodies or *sūkṣma s'arīras* caused by *karma* and conserved in the moral order of the universe, (3) the gross

elements of *prakṛti* that form the physical basis of reality according to *Vēdāntic* cosmology as defined in the *Antaryāmividyā* and (4) the spiritual bodies or *aprākṛta s'arīras* which embody the spiritual universe. Broadly speaking, the *s'arīras* comprise *cit* and *acit*. Brahman is essentially *niravayava* (without the material forms of *prakṛti*), *nirguṇa* (free from the *guṇas* of *prakṛti*), and unconditioned by *karma*. While the ephemeral *s'arīras* are subject to the perishing forms of matter and the moral vicissitudes of *karma*, the *s'arīrin* or *ātman* is pure and perfect. The definition of *s'arīra* should include all these given elements or data and attain positiveness, clearness and comprehensiveness by avoiding the fallacies of definition like *ativyāpti* (being too wide) and *avyāpti* (being too narrow). The infinite is really alogical in the sense that it transcends the logical intellect. The logical definition of supersensuous Reality as the end of knowledge is therefore an attempt to make a spiritual intuition intelligible to reason and commonsense by employing the language of sense and sense-symbolism.

In arriving at a true definition of the *s'arīra*, certain faulty definitions have to be criticized and ruled out. The definition given by the logician or *Naiyāyika* is that the *s'arīra* is a particular aggregate of earth and other physical elements depending for its subsistence on vital breath with its five modifications and serving as an abode to the sense organs which mediate experiences of pleasure and pain resulting from former works by way of retribution.[1] This is not one definition but a series of definitions which violate the essential rules of *lakṣaṇā*. The definition that the *s'arīra* is a combination of different elements is too narrow as it excludes

[1] *Y. M. D.*, IV. 75 and *S. B.*, II. i. 8. and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 420.

aprākṛta s'arīras and the body of *Bhagavān* which is *s'ubhas'raya* and *divya-maṅgaḷa vigraha* or the spiritual form of Beauty. The view that the *s'arīra* is composed of head and trunk and limbs is too wide as it includes dolls and dancing puppets and other physical models of the body. The body is thus not a mechanical whole made by the addition of parts. In the case of the tri-coloured piece of cloth which is an example of such a whole as cited in the *S'rī Bhāṣya*, the material cause consists of threads which are white, green and black and which form its warp and woof. It may likewise be argued as is done by Yādava that Brahman is the *sat* or whole which is made of *Īs'vara*, *cit* and *acit*. But the analogy is unsound, as there is no essential resemblance between the woven cloth and the universe created by Brahman. The notion of a potter-God that moulds things as an external artificer is foreign to *Vēdānta*. In the case of the cloth, the parts are only conjoined, but the universe is vitally related to Brahman who is its inner Self. The term, 'the body of a machine, car or ship,' is only descriptive and not definitory. A better definition of the *s'arīra* therefore would be that the life of which depends on the vital breath with its five-fold functions. This is too narrow as it would exclude plants whose vital air does not function in these five ways. The view of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of the universe is sometimes called the philosophy of organism as it brings out the truth that Brahman is the life of all life. The finite self is, like the foetus in the womb, sustained by the life of the whole organism and every self like the cell in the body pulsates with the all-sustaining life of *Paramātman*. The cosmos is explained biologically as creative evolution as in the *Puruṣa Sūkta*, and is said to be animated by the vital impulse of Brahman as *prāṇasya prāṇa* or the life of life that enters into the womb of matter and reproduces its

own infinite variations of life. But the idea of the *s'arīrin* cannot be equated with the philosophy of organism or vitalism as in the organism the self is the whole, whereas in the *s'arīrin*, the whole consists of wholes; the finite self is itself a mode or *aṃs'a* and a monad or entity. The two selves, the finite and the infinite, exist like two birds on the same tree; the Self of all is in the heart of finite life.

The definition that the body is the abode of the sense organs (*indriyās'raya*) is also too narrow as it excludes the bodies of *jīvas* devoid of such sense organs, like Ahalyā after she was transformed into a bare monad, and also many parts of the bodily organism which are not sense organs. In the spiritual interpretation of the universe, sensation has more value than cell or atom but a sensationalistic view is not adequate enough to explain reality. The *antaḥkaraṇa* or *sense commune* which is allied to the Kantian theory of the synthetic unity of apperception may be the soul of the psycho-physical process. But the *ātman* is more than this synthetic unity and the organism which is a combination of the mind and the body, is itself the *s'arīra* of the self of *jīva* and is its bodily basis. There is an allied definition of the *s'arīra* that it is the seat of action or activity (*cēṣṭās'raya*), but it is too wide. If *cēṣṭā* means *kriyā*, the jar would also be a *s'arīra* as it is the locus of *kriyā*. Still another definition of the *s'arīra* that it is what causes the enjoyment of the fruit of actions (*bhōgā-yatana*) is unsatisfactory as it excludes physical existents which are affirmed by the *S'ruti* to be the *s'arīra* of the *antaryāmin* and also *aprākṛta* forms assumed by the Lord by His redemptive will and by the free selves (*nityasūris*) none of which are fruition of the results of *karma*. The definition is too wide as it would include the residence of a person which is his

place of enjoyment. Brahman is itself the *upādāna kāraṇa* and the *upādēya*, the *upāya* and the *upēya*, and the idea of egoistic hedonism has no place in the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* philosophy of fruition. Nature lives, moves and has its being in Brahman and is the living embodiment of His creative will. There is still another definition of *s'arīra*, that it is created out of nothing by the fiat of the omnipotent will of God and it may be entirely destroyed by the same God as the all-destroyer. No *Vēdāntin* accepts this view of sudden creation, and, according to Rāmānuja, *cit* and *acit* are eternal but not external to *Īs'vara* who is the all-inclusive Infinite. The Infinite enters into the finite and evolves into the names and forms of the finite and resides in them as their eternal inner Ruler without being tainted by their imperfections.

We are now in a position to understand the exact meaning of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* and the universe as the *s'arīra*. According to Rāmānuja[1] that is called the *ātman* or *s'arīrin* which is always the container (*ādhāra*) and controller (*niyantā*) of another and which uses it for its own satisfaction (*s'ēṣi*). The *s'arīra* is so called by reason of its being in its entirety the *ādhēya*, the *niyāmya* and the *s'ēṣa* ; it is inseparable from the *s'arīrin* and forms its *apṛthakṣiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* or *prakāra*. Any substance which a sentient self can completely control and support for its own purposes and which stands to the self in an entirely dependent relation is called its *s'arīra*.[2] All sentient and non-sentient beings together constitute the *s'arīra* of *Paramātman*, for they live, move and have their being in Him and exist for His satisfaction. Owing to the entry of the Infinite into the finite as its

[1] *Vēdārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 207.

[2] *S. B.*, II. i. 9 & *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 424.

antaryāmin and the evolution of names and forms, each term that connotes the *s'arīra* of *Paramātman* connotes also *Īs'vara*, the *s'arīrin.* Brahman is the source and sustenance of the self and uses it for its satisfaction. While *prakṛti* is a fleeting flux and the empirical self is subject to the imperfections of embodiment due to *karma*, Brahman, the *s'arīrin*, is pure and perfect and is unaffected by these changes and imperfections. The finite self is both *s'arīra* and *s'arīrin* as it ensouls its body and is ensouled by its inner Ruler. When we say one is born as a man or god, or that one is a child and then a youth, we mean that the changes due to birth and age belong to the ensouled body and not to the *ātman* which is eternal and immutable. In the same way when we say that Brahman is the *s'arīrin* of the self, we refer to the inner Self as different from the *karma*-ridden *jīva.*

The interpretation of *Vēdāntic* texts in terms of the *s'arīra-s'arīri bhāva* has the advantage of reconciling[1] apparently contradictory texts without sacrificing their primary and natural meaning or *mukhyārtha.* The monistic texts like 'There is no plurality,' which deny difference, deny not the pluralistic universe but only the pluralistic view of reality. The *s'arīrin* or *prakārin* is one, but the *s'arīras* or *prakāras* are many. The *Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa* defines Brahman as the inner self of the *cētana* and the *acētana.* The absolutist as *jñānamātravādin*, who affirms the reality of pure consciousness and denies its self-consciousness and conscious nature, fails to explain the *saguṇa* texts like Brahman being the All-Self and the knower of all things (*sarvajña*, *sarvavit* and *jñānamaya*). These texts define the nature of Brahman as the cosmic ground (*sarvādhāra*), the inner ruler

[1] *Vēdārtha Saṅgraha*, pp. 237 to 247 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, pp. 139 to 144.

(*niyantā*) and *sarva s'ēṣi*. Brahman is and has intelligence as its essential quality and from this definition (*svarūpa-nirūpaka dharma*) follows an infinity of perfections. By denying predication, knowledge itself is denied and stultified. To affirm *saguṇa* Brahman with a view to reject it finally is neither consistent nor conciliatory and is opposed to the integrity and unity of scriptural knowledge. The texts that declare the essential distinction and differences between non-sentient matter, sentient selves and the Lord (*Sv. Up*. I. 6 and 10) affirm the difference between the *s'arīrin* and the *s'arīra*. The *jīvas* and *prakṛti* are the subjects and objects of experience, and the *antaryāmin* or the inner Self of the *jīva* is the super-subject. The difference between the *s'arīrin* and the *s'arīra* is well illustrated by the *Upaniṣadic* analogy of two birds sitting on the same tree, one of which is self-resplendent and blissful while the other tastes the sweets and bitters of life (*Sv. Up*., IV. 6). The *jīva* partakes of the nature of *Īs'vara*, and *prakṛti* is His lower nature.[1] *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* cosmology declares the non-difference of cause and effect[2] and concludes that Brahman is in its causal or effected condition according as it has for its *s'arīra* intelligent and non-intelligent beings in the subtle or in the gross state. The text 'Brahman is the world' connotes not absolute identity or *svarūpa aikya* but only the unity of the two as *s'arīra* and *s'arīrin*, as *upādāna kāraṇa* and *upādēya*, and does not contradict *nirvikāratva* (changelessness) or the state of the transcendental purity of Brahman. The *nirguṇa* texts do not negative determination but deny only the predication of evil and other imperfections to the *s'arīrin*, as bare negation would lead to nihilism or *s ūnyavāda*. *Aikyavāda* or the philosophy

[1] *B. G.*, VII. 4 & 5.

[2] *Ch. Up*., VI. ii. 1 & 2 and *Bṛ. Up*., I. iv, 7.

of identity as contained in the texts 'Thou art that,'[1] 'All this is Brahman,'[2] affirms the unity of the self and its *s'arīra* in the light of the rule of coordination without abandoning the primary meaning of the texts. The term that connotes S'vētakētu connotes also the inner self or *s'arīrin* of S'vētakētu as terms connoting the *s'arīra* also connote the *s'arīrin*, and this *s'arīrin* is *saguṇa* Brahman.[3] It brings out the truth that the inner Self or *ātmā* of the *jīva* is Brahman,[4] the ground of the universe, and not the identity of the finite and the Infinite. The finite self is identical with the infinite in connotation, though there is difference between the two in denotation. They are different existentially but they are similar in their *guṇa*. Even the *Advaitin* that believes in *jīvanmukti* or liberation during life has to accept only partial identity and the existence of an infinity of *jīvas* who are yet clouded by *avidyā*, if he is to escape the charge of solipcism and acosmism. Thus Rāmānuja concludes that all the *S'ākhas* of the *Vēda* and *Vēdānta* have the unity of Brahman as their purport and purpose.

From the standpoint of philosophic thinking no less than that of revelational authority, the synoptic view of *sarīra-s'arīri bhāva* is justified and justifiable. In a critical summary in the *Vēdārtha Saṅgraha*, Rāmānuja concludes that this view is a reconciliation of the extremes of *Vēdāntic* doctrines like the schools of *abhēda*, *bhēdābhēda* and *bhēda*. *Abhēda* is established by the idea of Brahman as the unity of the *s'arīra-s'arīri* relation in which the *s'arīrin* is the one without a second that sustains the manifold of *cit* and *acit*. The view

[1] *Ch. Up.*, VI. viii. 7.

[2] *Ch. Up.* III. xiv. 1.

[3] As Dramiḍācārya says " Brahman is what is adored as *saguṇa* (tad guṇa kōpāsanāt)—*Vēdārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 247.

[4] *S. B.*, I. i. 1, p. 94 & *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 130.

that the *prakārin* is the one that exists as the many *prakāras* supports the truth of *bhēdābhēda*, and *bhēda* is proved by the fact of the eternal distinction between *cit*, *acit* and *Īs'vara* in their nature and character (*svarūpa* and *svabhāva*). In summing up and estimating the philosophy of the *S'ārīraka Sūtras* in the first two chapters relating to ontology and cosmology, Rāmānuja reveals his synthetic insight into the soul of *Vēdāntic* thought by his attitude to the other systems of *Vēdic* and *āsthika* philosophy and the method of interpreting their inner connection. In solving the problem raised in the *Mahābhārata* composed by the same *ṛṣi*, Vyāsa, namely, whether the *Sāṅkhya*, the *Yōga*, the *Vēda*, the *Pās'upata* and the *Pāñcarātra* systems have a common philosophic foundation, Rāmānuja adopts the *samanvaya* method by his acceptance of the essentials only (*svarūpa mātra*) of these schools in so far as they do not contradict the central truth of the *S'ārīraka S'āstra*.[1] While the *Sāṅkhyan* cosmology of the twenty-five categories has its meaning in the basic idea that the twenty-five *tattvas* have Brahman, the twenty-sixth *tattva* or Truth, as their source and sustaining self, the scheme of *yōga* discipline has its final end in the meditation on Brahman. The *Vēdic* insistence on the performance of *karma* has its consummation in the *Vēdāntic* view of regarding work as the worship of the Supreme Self (*ārādhana*). It also recognizes the *Pās'upata* variety in so far as it accepts the immanence of the *antaryāmin* or *s'arīrin* and its ethics. The *Pāñcarātra* as the direct revelation of Nārāyaṇa contains the essentials of all these systems and is their very soul. Thus the *S'ārīraka S'āstra* as a synthetic view of *Vēdānta* accepts whatever is

[1] s'ārīrakē ca sāṅkhyōktatattvānām abrahmātmakatāmātram nirākṛtam na svarūpam i yōga pās'upatayōs'ca īs'varasya kēvala nimittakāraṇatā * * * nirākṛtaḥ-na yōgasvarūpam pas'upatisvarūpam ca.—*S'rī Bhāṣya*, II. ii. 43.

true, good and beauiful in other systems owing to its criterion of comprehensiveness which means that what is true works as opposed to the pragmatic view that what works is true. It is also to be distinguished from eclecticism which pieces together what is good in all systems without proving their vital relations. The truth of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of all beings is clearly intuited by the *Āḻvars* and summed up in the Tamil *Vēda* "*udalmis'ai uyir.*" Rāmānuja thus shows that the foundational truth of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* furnishes the key to the understanding of all philosophical systems.

In the highest sense of the term, the *S'rī Bhāṣya* concludes with the very significant note of the *S'ārīraka Mīmāṃsa* '*sarvaṃ samañjasaṃ*' (everything is satisfactorily explained). This includes philosophical satisfactoriness as well as spiritual satisfyingness which is traceable to the infinite suggestiveness of the synthetic insight afforded by the *s'arīra-s'arīri bhāva* called the *differentia* and *raison-d-etre* of Rāmānuja *dars'ana.* It satisfies the fundamental *Upaniṣadic* text "What is that by knowing which everything else is known ?" by the solution that it is Brahman which is the *s'arīrin* of all beings. Brahman is *saguṇa* and the distinction between *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* Brahman is itself *saguṇa.* The relation between Brahman and the world as *s'arīrin* and *s'arīra* is defined in terms of *ādhāra* and *ādhēya*, *niyantā* and *niyāmya*, and *s ēṣi* and *s'ēṣa*, which are only logically distinguishable and not separable. The first aspect which is the ontology of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, developed in Chapter IV, defines Brahman as *satyam* or *satyasya satyam* as real reality or the true of the true and the life of our life, as the subject of subjects or the super-subject, (*jñānam*) or *jyōtiṣām jyōtis* (the light of all lights) and the true infinite as the eternal of eternals. The second aspect of Brahman as

niyantā, as expounded in Chapter V, defines the Brahman of metaphysics as the *Īs'vara* of ethical religion who is the righteous ruler of the universe without any taint of caprice, cruelty or evil and *sarva rakṣaka* or universal redeemer. The third aspect of Brahman as *s'ēṣi*, the independent, which is described, in Chapter VII stresses the self-related and the self-realized nature of Brahman as contrasted with the nature of *cit* and *acit* as eternally dependent on His redemptive will or *saṅkalpa* and as existing and working for His satisfaction. The aesthetic philosophy of *Vis'iṣṭādvāita* as formulated in Chapter VIII dwells on the bewitching beauty of Brahman as *bhuvana sundara* and its entrancing bliss or *ānandamaya*. These are distinguishing marks of Brahman. They are the systole and the diastole of the all-sustaining and pulsating life of *Paramātman* as *s'arīrin* which is to be intuited rather than logically defined. The cosmological explanation of Brahman as the *upādāna* and *nimitta kāraṇa*, the material and efficient cause of the world, satisfies the requirements of logical immanence and ethical eminence and removes the apparent conflict between the absolute of dialectic metaphysics and the God of ethical religion. The essential qualities of Brahman described as *satyam. jñānam, anantam, amalam* and *ānandam* embody the eternal values of truth, goodness and beauty and therefore satisfy the highest demands of epistemology, ethics and aesthetics. The apparent contradictions of *s'āstra* are removed by the all-conciliatory nature of the *ghaṭaka s'rutis* or reconciling texts and the concept of *s'arīra-s'arīri* satisfies the triple *pramāṇas* of revelation, reasoning and sense-perception in their integral unity. It fits in with the ontological realism of *satkāryavāda*, the grammatical rule of *sāmānādhikaraṇya*, the logical correlations of *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* and the *mīmāṃsā* rules of interpretation. It furnishes the inspiring motive for

mystic communion by insisting on the ultimacy of Brahman and the inner intimacy between Brahman and the self, and for spiritual service to all *jīvas* owing to the similarity of their spiritual nature and the kinship due to their one indwelling Ruler. In this way every thought, word and deed refer ultimately to the *s'arīrin* who is the life of our life, the light of the universe and the love of our love, and everything is satisfactorily explained.

The synthetic system of *s'arīra-s'arīri bhava* is thus the one universal philosophy that satisfactorily explains every aspect of existence and experience. The categories of thought do not sublate reality but exist in it as pulsations of the living intelligence of *ātman* as every proposition or judgment has its meaning in Brahman as the meaning of meanings. The *s'arīrin* is the source and sustenance of all thinking beings and objects, which therefore exist as and for His satisfaction. He is the first cause of all things and their final cause and the root of life and its fruit. The world is *Brahmamaya* and not *bramamaya*, and *māyā* has its meaning only in the *māyin* whose alluring Beauty and *līlā* transform the ugly self into the shining forms in *S'ri Vaikuṇṭha*. He is the immanent reason of the universe and the eminent Holy beyond it. He is the ground of existence and the goal of experience. He is the *summum genus* and the *summum bonum*, the supreme ground of all and the supreme goal of life. He is the highest ideal of life in whom all the ideals of rationality, righteousness and rapture are eternally self-realized. He alone has universal validity, unsurpassed valour and absolute value. He is the supreme subject of *jñāna* or thought, the supreme actor in the world of will and the most blissful *rasa* in the realm of emotion. He is the thinker of thinkers,

the creator of creators and the *rasa* of *rasas*. Viewed from the idealistic tradition of western thought, the *s'arīrin* is not the mindless and motionless Being of Parmeanides, nor the abstract universal of Plato. He is neither the Transcendent One of Plotinus, nor the Indeterminate substance of Spinoza. He is not the panlogical subject of Hegel nor the Ego of Fichte. From the realistic standpoint, Brahman is not the concrete universal of Aristotle nor the monad of monads of Leibnitz, nor the God of Personalism and theism. Western idealism and realism with their different variations may be acceptable to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* in so far as they do not contradict the essentials of the *s'arīra-s'arīri saṃbandha*. Western philosophy will gain in clearness and distinctness by recognizing the *Vēdāntic* ideas of the moral law of causation or *karma* by which the self has the freedom to lapse into vice and lower life or grow into godliness, the eternity of the *ātman* as different from its endless migrations, the immanence and eminence of Brahman and the view of the unity of nature as the environment for transforming the self into the likeness of Brahman and the truth that the philosophical knowledge of Brahman leads to the spiritual realization of Brahman and its eternal bliss.

CHAPTER X

COSMOLOGY

VĒDĀNTIC cosmology is contained in the *Sadvidyā* of the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* and expounded in the *Ārambhaṇa Adhikaraṇa* of the *Vēdānta Sūtras* (II. i. 15). In the *Sadvidyā*, the teacher, Uddālaka, initiates the pupil, S'vētakētu, into the *Vēdāntic* truth that Brahman is the ground of the universe, by knowing which everything is known. Deity is the beginning of the evolutionary process and its end. The non-difference between Brahman and the universe is brought out by illustrative instances drawn from ordinary experience. One and the same substance like a lump of clay or a bar of gold enters into different states in succession, and thereby assumes different configurations.[1] The same substance, clay, enters into many states like pots and pitchers, and becomes their immanent cause or *upādāna kāraṇa*. The one transfigures into the many, and the process subserves a practical interest. What exists as a real possibility in the subtle state becomes actualized in the gross state. It is the non-differentiated which exists without name and form that becomes differentiated. This principle explains the true meaning of cosmology, and shows the unity of the causal relation. In *pralaya*, Brahman exists

[1] yathā sōmyaikēna mṛtpiṇḍēna sarvam mṛṇmayam vijñātam syādvācārambhaṇam vikārō nāmadhēyam mṛttikētyēva satyam.—*Ch. Up.*, VI. i. 4.

S. B., II. i. 15, p. 40 of Vol. II & *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 454.

with the modes of *cit-acit* in such a subtle state that the modes may be treated as practically non-existent. Brahman is then in the causal state as *natura naturans*. It is then the absolute, the one without any distinction or difference of name and form. In the *sṛṣṭi* state, the one wills the many and becomes the manifold with an infinity of sentient and non-sentient beings. Brahman is in the effected state as *natura naturata*. Since the cause and its effect are non-different, the effect, namely, the cosmic order, is the same as the cause or Brahman. The *Upaniṣads* repeatedly proclaim this truth of causal immanence in different ways. The *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* says: "All this indeed is Brahman."[1] The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* says: "There is no plurality here."[2] "When the self is known, all this is known."[3] By knowing the cause, the effect is known. By knowing Brahman, the absolute, the universe with its manifold differences is known. This cosmological unity has its completion only in the spiritual wisdom resulting in the intuition of S'vētakētu that Brahman is the cosmic ground and also his own inner Self. The *Upaniṣadic* truth "Thou art that" is a realization that the cosmic ground is the same as the inner self of the *jīva*. Brahman thus moulds the universe for the making of the *ātman* and brahmanizing it. The central principle on which the theory of the origin and development of the universe is based is familiarly known as *satkāryavāda* and is different from that of the atheistic *Sāṅkhya*. According to it, nothing new comes into being, nor is anything created out of nothing. The creationist objects to this view by citing the *Upaniṣad*

[1] sarvam khalvidam brahma | *Ch. Up.*, III. xiv. 1.
ātmaivēdam sarvam | *Ch. Up.*, VII. xxv. 2.

[2] nēha nānāsti kiñcana—*Br. Up.*, IV. iv. 19 & *Kaṭh. Up.*, II. iv. 11.

[3] ātmani khalvarē dṛṣṭē s'rutē matē vijñātē idam sarvam viditam |—*Br. Up.*, IV. v. 6.

that *asat* alone existed in the beginning.[1] But his view is wrong, as another *Upaniṣad*[2] makes the meaning clear by saying that the *asat* is the implicit and not the non-existent. "This was then undistinguished at first; it became distinguished by name and form." "In the true, all beings have their root; in the true, they abide and in the true they rest."[3] In *praḷaya* the cosmos exists potentially without any distinction, but in *sṛṣṭi*, what remained enfolded becomes unfolded. It is not the emergence of something new, but the self-differentiation of the same reality. Being alone becomes, and is the cause of the becoming. The one alone becomes the many, and is the cause of the manifold. In this way, the cause is immanent in the effect and is non-different from it. Brahman with *cit-acit* in a state of non-differentiation becomes Brahman with *cit-acit* in a state of differentiation with an infinity of distinctions in name and form. The absolute broods and becomes the many by evolving unto the world-body (*pariṇāmāt*).[4] The contention of the illusionist, that creation is not real, does not hold good, as there is no discrepancy in the process of self-development. The *Ārambhaṇa Adhikaraṇa* combats also the *Dvaitavāda* of Kanāḍa and its atomistic and pluralistic account of the universe. Kanāḍa's theory of *samavāya* as the external and eternal relation between cause

[1] asad vā idam agra āsīt I tatō vai sad ajāyata I tad ātmānam svayam akuruta I tasmāt tat sukṛtam ucyata iti I—*Taitt. Up.*, Ānand. vii.

[2] taddhēdam tarhyavyākṛtam āsīt tan nāmarupābhyāmēva vyākriyatē I *Bṛ. Up.*, I. iv. 7.

sad ēva sōmyēdam agra āsīdēkamevādvitīyam taddhaika āhurasadēvēdam agra āsīdēkam ēvādvitīyam tasmād asatas sajjāyata I
kutastu khalu sōmyaivam syād iti hōvāca katham asatas sajjāvētēti sattvēva sōmyēdam agra āsīd ēkam ēvādvitīyam I
tad aikṣata bahu syām prajāyēyēti I—*Ch. Up.*, VI. ii. 1, 2. 3.

[3] sanmūlās sōmyēmās sarvāh prajās sadāyatanās satpratiṣṭhaḥ.—*Ch. Up.*, VI. viii, 6.

[4] *S. B.*, I. iv. 27, p. 405 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII. p. 403.

and effect is open to the charge of infinite regress. The idea that the cosmos is caused by the motion of atoms due to the *adṛṣṭas* of the *jīva* does not improve the case, as the interaction between the atoms and the *adṛṣṭas* is mechanical and unintelligible. The idea of God as an extra-cosmic designer militates against the idea of divine immanence. If the pluralistic origin were accepted, the cosmos would not be a universe. It would then be a multiverse, and there would be as many worlds as there are *jīvas* and *adṛṣṭas*.

The *Māyāvādin* comes forward with his theory of *vivarta* and *adhyāsa* to repudiate *Dvaitavāda* or dualism, and affirms that the idea of causality involves self-contradiction, and that the effect is only an illusory appearance of the absolute. Brahman falsely appears as the world of *nāma-rūpa*. According to him, Brahman is eternally self-illumined, but, owing to *adhyāsa*, it illusorily manifests itself as the world. If, as the *Vais'ēṣika* urges, the relation between cause and effect is external, it is a manifest self-contradiction, as externality and relation cannot both be true. Besides, every cause will have its cause and so on *ad infinitum*. If the relation is not external, but internal, internality would lead to the identity of cause and effect. Then Brahman and the world would be identical, which is absurd. The view that Brahman is partially manifest as the world is also indefensible. Brahman is without parts, and it is therefore a fallacious argument to say that a part of Brahman changes into the world and that another part is outside it, nor can Brahman change in its entirety and become the world.[1] The so-called *pariṇāmic* process or *vikāra*, by which the cause becomes the effect, is really *vivarta*. What is is and it can

[1] *S.B.*, II, i, 26 and 27, & *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 473.

never become. Becoming is only a trick of speech, and is figurative and not a fact at all. The modification of the cause into the effect is only illusory like the phantoms of a dream. The world of *nāma-rupa* is super-imposed on Brahman, like the shell erroneously seen as silver, and it is due to *avidyā*. No doubt, from the *vyāvahārika* or practical standpoint, the world process has phenomenal reality, and serves our practical interests. But it is an appearance only and, like dreams that are sublated in the subsequent waking state, the world phantom disappears in the absolute, when true knowledge arises. The theory of the universe as the self-manifestation of Brahman is a case of self-deception like the illusion created by the magician. Nescience veils the one and makes it the seeming many whether it is the contrary of *vidyā* or its contradictory. *Īs'vara* is himself said to be 'the first born of cosmic nescience' and such nescience is logically a case of subjective illusion or *avidyā*. Strictly speaking, the whole world of sentient and non-sentient beings is fictitiously created by the *avidyā* of the single soul or *ēkajīva* and the theory of *ēkajīva* is irrefutable. It therefore follows that I alone create all beings and sustain them by my intelligence.[1] Thus from the higher metaphysical or esoteric standpoint, cosmology is dissolved into psychology and causality is proved to be illusory. The *Adhikaraṇa* disproves the theories of *samavāya* and *pariṇāma*, and concludes that the effect in the world process is an illusion and that Brahman, the cause, alone is real.

The *Bhēdābhēdavādin* steps in at this stage and joins issue with the illusionist. He attacks the *Māyavādin* on all fronts, and shows that the theory contradicts all *pramāṇas*, and is spiritually futile. Every *Vēdāntin* is agreed that

[1] *Kaiv. Up.*, I. 19, & *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 448.

the nature of Brahman as the world ground can be ascertained only by means of *s'āstra* and not by means of *anumāna* and that the *s'āstra* nowhere favours the doctrine of *māyā* or *avidyā.* The theory is an alien graft on *Vēdānta* and not an inner growth and the *Sadvidyā*, on which the whole cosmological theory is based, nowhere refers to the shell-silver example or the dream analogy. Causality is nowhere condemned to be self-contradictory or illusory, but is employed as the fundamental category to expound the origin of the universe. The terms *sadēva* and *ārambhaṇa* bring out the fact of causality as *pariṇāma* or transformation[1] and not of illusoriness or *vivarta.* If, as the illusionist urges, the cause is real and the effect is false, this falsity will infect the integrity of the cause itself, and then even the *Vēda* and the *mumukṣu* who relies on it will be false. *Bhēdābhēdavādins* like Bhāskara, Yādava and Nimbārka, therefore, reject the illusion theory as an illusory idea, and adopt the method of *satkārya vāda* and *Brahma pariṇāma vāda* or the emanation theory. In the causal relation the cause is the *abhēda* or non-different aspect, and the effect, the *bhēda* or difference aspect, and the relation itself is *bhēdābhēda* or identity in difference. According to Bhāskara, Brahman exists as the one without a second in *praḷaya*; but in *sṛṣṭi* it energizes itself and emanates successively into the manifold of sentient and non-sentient beings. Brahman is *saguṇa* and has a twofold *s'akti* or power, namely, *jīva pariṇāma* and *acētana pariṇāma*, by which He becomes the finite centres and objects of experience. The causal relation is not temporal or logical, as it essentially brings out the immanent unity and self-activity of God. Like the spider weaving its web, the absolute transforms itself

[1] *S.B.*, II, i, 15.

into the relative by its *pariṇāma s'akti* or evolving power. Brahman, the unconditioned, becomes the conditioned, and differentiates itself into the infinity of beings, each having its own form and function. The infinite finitizes itself, and yet transcends the limitation of finitude. Brahman emerges into the *jīva*, and the *jīva* merges finally into Brahman. The emanation of the *jīva* is the downward process, and its ascent to the absolute means absorption or *ēkībkāva* and the ecstasy resulting from it.

The other *Bhēdābhēdavādins* accept the *pariṇāma vāda* of Bhāskara, but reject his spiritual monism. They insist on the eternal difference and non-difference between Brahman on the one hand and *cit* and *acit* on the other. The one is in and as the many, and is their causal explanation. According to Yādava, *Brahmatva* is the causal unity of the universe constituted by the threefold distincts of *Īs'vara*, the cosmic Ruler, *cit*, the experiencing subject, and *acit*, the object of experience. Just as the water of the sea turns itself into waves, foam and bubbles, Brahman manifests itself in the triadic forms. The absolute as pure being divides itself into *Īs'vara*, finite centres and material things, and being as such is present in all its parts as the *sat*. In *pralaya* these distinctions exist in a potential state, and *sṛṣṭi* is the self-differentiation of this triune unity. *Pariṇāma s'akti* is the creative urge at the heart of reality, and the finite self that fulgurates from Brahman is an integral element of the absolute. Bhartṛprapañca holds that Brahman divides itself into the trinity of *Īs'vara*, *cit* and *acit*. They exist as the basis of reality as a unity in trinity, and owing to *avidyā* that belongs to the *jīva*, the infinite finitizes itself into the *avasthās* of the *jīva*.[1] Nimbārka also explains the origin of

[1] Prof. Hiriyanna's pamphlet on *Bhartṛprapañca*.

the universe as the self-actualization of *saguṇa* Brahman. In the *abhēda* aspect, Brahman is self-related (*svatantra sadbhāva*); and in the *bhēdābhēda* aspect of creation, there is distinction as well as dependence between *Īs'vara* on the one hand and *cit* and *acit* on the other. Brahman is the *s'akta* or Almighty and owing to His immanent *s'akti*, the world order, which is enfolded in *praḷaya* like the coils of a snake, becomes actualized in *sṛṣṭi*. Brahman is thus immanent in the universe as its *upādāna kāraṇa* and transcends it as its *nimitta kāraṇa*. Whatever their minor differences, all the *Bhēdābhēdavādins* agree in thinking that Brahman is the cause of the universe in the sense that the two have a *bhēdābhēda* relation. Brahman is identical with the universe of *cit* and *acit* as well as different from it; and the *Sadvidyā* as well as the *Sūtras* expounds *Vēdāntic* cosmology in terms of *Brahma pariṇāma vāda*.

The chronological transition from S'aṅkara, Bhāskara and Yādavaprākas'a to Rāmānuja is also a logical transition. Bhāskara rejects S'aṅkara, Yādava refutes Bhāskara and Rāmānuja repudiates Yādava and the other *Vēdāntins* and establishes the truth of *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* cosmology. They all agree in disproving the *asat kārya vāda* of the *Vais'ēṣika* and his doctrine of *samavāya* and in demolishing the Buddhistic theories of momentariness or *kṣaṇa bhaṅgavāda* and atheism. The theory of momentariness makes life and even the stability of the theorizing activity impossible. Rāmānuja brings to light the absurdity of the whole position thus: If everything is momentary, the sentient subject has perished and the object of sensation has perished. One person cannot cognize what has been apprehended by another.[1] All the schools of *Vēdānta* including the exoteric

[1] S. B., II. ii. 17 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 501.

side of *Advaita* accept the truth that there is uniformity in nature and that every new *sṛṣṭi* is a repetition of the past[1] and that *sṛṣṭi* and *pralaya* are a cyclic process whose origin is not logically accountable. The *Advaitic* theory of *Māyāvāda* is attacked by all the other *Vēdāntins* on the ground that its intention is Buddhistic though the motive may be *Vēdāntic*. The *Advaitin* relies on the principle of non-contradiction and sublation to prove his thesis that Brahman, the cause or ground, is identical with itself, and the world, the effect, as such, is illusory and non-existent. On the principles of sublation or *apacchēda*, it follows that what cannot be subsequently sublated is alone real and that *nirguṇa* Brahman alone is the *sat* without a second which defies sublation. Rāmānuja sees no reason why the argument should not be extended further up to universal void. The only reality is thus the universal void because it alone cannot be subsequently sublated as no negative movement can go beyond the void. Pan-illusionism may thus lapse into pure nothingness by negating negation. To avoid this *cul de sac*, the *Māyāvādin* has to retrace his steps, abandon the idea of *Īs'vara* as the arch-illusionist, who somehow takes to self-deception, and follow the way of *saguṇa* Brahman as the self-revealing and self-communicating *ātman*, that enters into life with a view to enriching it and not stultifying or impoverishing its content. The *Bhēdābhēdavādin* has no doubt corrected the subjectivism and pan-illusion of *Māyāvāda*, but is guilty of attributing the imperfections of life to Brahman. If, as Bhāskara says, the infinite is finitized by real limiting adjuncts or *satyōpādhis* and becomes the *jīva*, it may become the victim of *karma* and of the hazards of *saṃsāra*. The Yādava theory is equally wild and mischievous, as it leads to shallow optimism. If being is present in

[1] *S. B.*, II. i. 35 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 479.

all its parts, then reality is as fully present and perfect in dust as in the deity. The absolute will be richer for every discord, error and evil. *Īs'vara* as less than the absolute is then not worthy of worship.

The *Sadvidyā*, according to Rāmānuja, brings out the non-difference in the relation between cause and effect as applied to cosmology. The creative urge expressed in the thought that the *sat* without a second willed to be the many is not the fall into *ajñāna* in which negation enters into *nirguṇa* Brahman, but is the energizing, dynamic idea of self-revelation. Being alone becomes, and becoming has its meaning only in being. The same substance enters into different states without losing its substantiality. The *sat* in *praḷaya* is homogeneous without any distinction of *nāma-rūpa* and the same *sat* in *sṛṣṭi* differentiates itself and evolves into the heterogeneity of names and forms and becomes their inner self. The one enters into the many and becomes *sat*, the sentient, and *tyat*, the non-sentient.[1] The manifold of *cit* and *acit* is pre-existent in the *praḷaya* state, but it is so subtle that it may be practically treated as non-existent. In the condition of *sṛṣṭi*, the manifold as the infinity of living and non-living beings is fully evolved and made explicit. In the causal as well as the effected state, the same Brahman exists with its modes implicit or explicit. Creation is therefore not out of nothing. It is only a process of the undifferentiated becoming the differentiated. Cause and effect are therefore non-different [2], and by knowing Brahman, the cause, the effect, namely, the universe, is also known. If Brahman alone is real and the cosmic process is false, the *Vēdāntic* question

[1] S. *B.*, II. i. 15, p. 42 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 457.
[2] *S. B. E.*. XLVIII, p. 459.

"What is the one that explains the many?" would be stultified and made meaningless. The *Advaitin* contends that *bhēda* is a bar to the infinity of Brahman and is therefore false. But his case is not better than that of the *Dvaitavādin* as, on his view also, *avidyā* is something different from Brahman, and, to that extent, limits its nature. Difference as well as otherness is essential to the understanding of identity.

Causality in *Vēdāntic* cosmology is different from the Sāṅkhyan concept of teleology and the mechanical views of creation. The term 'cause' is not merely used in the logical sense of an invariable and essential antecedent or *avasthā* of a phenomenon. Every cause is a 'because' and is identified with the ground. The mechanical view is to be reinterpreted teleologically, and the term then connotes immanent causality. The apt illustrations of the causal relation are not clay and its modifications or the different vital airs which arise from the one air, but the development of life from childhood to youth.[1] The causal relation is analogous to that of the child and the youth. The mechanical and the teleogical views receive a new orientation from the idea of biographical or spiritual development. Personality implies inner growth and the unfolding of the infinite consciousness that belongs to the *jīva*. Causality thus implies continuity, immanent unity and free causality. From a still higher point of view, it refers to the *sat* without a second as the inner Self of all living and non-living beings. They have their source and sustenance in the Self and cannot exist apart from it. The universe is rooted in Brahman and pulsates with its life. Every sentient being is sustained by its adaptation to the living intelligence of Brahman. Ultimately the term causality may

[1] *S. B.*, II. i. 16 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 463.

be employed in a comprehensive sense and made to include these related ideas. It refers to the *pariṇāmic* modifications of *prakṛti*, the free causality of the *karma* of the finite self or *jīva* and the supra-personal identity of Brahman as the inner ground of the system of nature and the society of selves. Nature not only is but also becomes, and the process of nature, is ever changing and is so made as to adapt itself to the spiritual progress of the *jīva*, and the plan or purpose of creation is the perfection of the *jīva* as an *aṃs'a* or part of Brahman. The cosmological problem is the threefold problem of philosophy relating to nature, self and God. It is by the will of *Īs'vara* that nature changes and the self progresses, and it is by knowing Him as the inner Self of all beings that all beings are known. Brahman is the ultimate meaning of the universe, and the philosophy of nature and that of the self have their foundations only in the *Vēdāntic* knowledge of Brahman. Thus understood, causality is not an altar to the unknown God, but is an adequate idea, which explains the nature of Brahman as the world-ground and goal.

The order of creation as set forth in the *s'āstra* may now be considered in detail and the evolution of *prakṛti* may first be studied in the light of the principle of *pariṇāma* or transformation. *Prakṛti* is differently spoken of as *akṣara*, *avidyā* and *māyā* and is defined as the locus or substratum of the three *guṇas*, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. It exists for consciousness and not in consciousness. Though *prakṛti* is eternal or *akṣara*, it is ever changing in its form and function. It is called *avidyā*, as it obscures and obstructs the knowledge of Brahman, and is known as *māyā* as it connotes the wonders of creation. In *pralaya*, it is matter in its static or undifferentiated state and

[1] *S. B.*, II. i. 22 and 23 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 469.

is known as *avibhakta tamas.* The next stage is the first tension of differentiation or *vibhakta tamas.* Like the seed that swells, sprouts, becomes a sapling and grows into a mighty tree, *prakṛti*, which is static in the primordial state, energizes, begins to grow and becomes the infinite universe. *Prakṛti* evolves into *mahat* with the three states of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. *Mahat* changes into *ahaṅkāra* with the same three states according to their predominance of a particular phase and *ahaṅkāra* is called *vaikārika*, *taijasa* and *bhūtādi*. *Ahaṅkāra* in this sense is different from conceit. From the first kind of *ahaṅkāra* aided by the second originate the eleven sense organs or *indriyas*. They are the psychical and *sāttvic* sides of evolution. The *indriyas* are two-fold, namely, the cognitive sense-organs or *jñānēndriyas* and the conative sense-organs or *karmēndriyas*. The first enable the self to apprehend external objects and are classified into *manas*, sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. *Manas* is the inner sense organ or *antaḥkaraṇa*, the *sense commune* which is the inner coordinating organ of sense knowledge and is the seat of memory. *Manas* functions as *ahaṅkāra*, *citta* and *buddhi* and is the cause both of bondage and of *mukti*. It is called *ahaṅkāra* when the *ātman* is falsely identified with the body, *citta* when it desires a thing and *buddhi* when it discriminates between what is true and what is false. The eye is the specific sense-organ that apprehends the sensation of colour or *rūpa*, the ear of hearing, the nose of odour, the tongue of taste and the skin of touch. The five conative sense organs are speech, movement, grasping, excretion and generation. The *indriyas* are minute and are conjoined with the *jīva* in all its adventures of birth and death till the atainment of *mukti*. Even then they are not destroyed, but enter into the lives of other migrating selves. The *indriyas* are neither good nor evil by

themselves, and they are so subtle that *yōgis* can see even through walls and know all things. From the *tāmasāhaṅkāra* called *bhūtādi* arise the cosmic factors of the five subtle elements or *tanmātras*, and the five gross elements or *bhūtas* are the successive evolutions of the *tanmātras*. The *tanmātras* are sound, touch, colour, savour, and odour (*s'abda, spars'a, rūpa, rasa* and *gandha*) and the five corresponding gross elements are ether (*ākās'a*), air (*vāyu*), fire (*tējas*), water (*ap*) and earth (*pṛthivī*). From ether springs air, from air fire, from fire water, and from water earth. When *vāyu* sustains the body, it is called the vital air and is minute and is fivefold, namely, *prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna* and *samāna*. In this way the universe is the self-differentiation in successive forms of the same *acit* into the twenty-four categories of *prakṛti, mahat, ahaṅkāra*, eleven *indriyas*, five *tanmātras* and five *bhūtas*. Since they all evolve from one cosmic stuff, they prove the unity and continuity of nature.

The creation of the elements and sense organs constitutes only the collective aspect or *samaṣṭi* which precedes the *vyaṣṭi* aspect. The *Sadvidyā* refers to the divine act of tripartition which implies quintuplication. The principle underlying this process consists in the inclusion of all the qualities in all the elements.[1] Each of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether, is divided into two parts and one half of each is combined with one-eighth of the remaining elements. The universe is composed of the five mixed elements and each substance is so called because of the preponderance of one or other element. It is only by such quintuplication that particular things with specific names and

[1] Nothing in this world is single.
All things by a law divine in each other's being mingle,—Shelly.

forms are created. In explaining the meaning of the *Sūtra* (II. iv. 17), which dwells on this topic, Rāmānuja, following the *Sūtrakāra*, says: " Having entered into these elements, with Myself qualified by the collective soul as its body, let Me differentiate names and forms, that is, let Me produce gods and all the other kinds of individual beings and give them names." [1] Says the *Smṛti*: " Separate from each other without connection, these elements were incapable of producing creatures. But having entered into mutual conjunction, the principles from *mahat* to individual things produced the mundane egg." [2] The process of individuation or *vyaṣṭi s'ṛṣṭi* is also due to Brahman acting through Brahma and not merely to Brahma, the aggregate of the *jīvas*, who is only the first born of the abolute. Brahma himself evolved out of *Brahmāṇḍa* containing the fourteen worlds, and after the creation of Brahma, the remaining cosmic process dealing with the origin of the species takes place through his agency. The souls are eternal, and joined to *acit* they persist even in *praḷaya* in a subtle state destitute of names and forms, and therefore incapable of being designated as something apart from Brahman. In *sṛṣṭi*, Brahman as the omnipotent *Īs'vara*, bestows on all *jīvas* bodies and sense organs suited to their *karma* and He enters into them as their inner Ruler. Entry is opposed to immanence and, strictly speaking, connotes self-differentiation. Each *s'arīrin* or *jīva* has its own *s'arīra* or *kṣētra* composed of *prakṛti*, *mahat*, *ahaṅkāra* and the five elements." [3] The eleven senses are conjoined with

[1] imāḥ tējōbannarūpās *tisrō dēvatāḥ anēna jīvēna* jivasamaṣṭivis'iṣṭēna *ātmanā anupravis'ya nāmarūpē vyākaravāni* dēvādi vicitras'ṛṣṭitannāmadhēyāni ca karavāṇi.—*S. B.*, II. iv. 17 and *S. B. E.*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 580.

[2] ṅānāvīryāḥ pṛthakbhutāḥ tatastē samhatim vinā |
nās'aknuvan prajās sraṣṭum asamāgamya kṛtsnas'ah ||
samētyānyōnya samyōgam paraspara samas'rayāh |
mahadādyā vis'ēṣantāhyaṇḍam utpādayanti tē ||—*V. P.*, II. i, 52-53.

[3] *B. G.*, XIII. 5 & 6.

the *puruṣa* and are like gems set in a jewel. *S'arīra* is either immovable (*sthāvara*) like trees and shrubs or movable like the bodies of *dēvas*, human beings and animals (*tiryak*). From the genetic standpoint, the bodies may be seed-born, sweat-born, egg-born or womb-born. There may also be spontaneous generation. In this way all *jīvas* from the barest monad to Brahma, the highest monad, form a hierarchy according to their *karma* and an amœba may develop into an *amara* or god just as a *dēva* or god may be born as a crawling insect. Even Brahma, the other *dēvas* and superhuman beings have their bodies, sense organs and places of experience. It is, however, possible for a *dēva* or a *yōgin* like Saubhari to reside in several bodies at the same time.

The *Sūtrakāra* next addresses himself to the question whether a new *sṛṣṭi* is a repetition of the past or a new creation and solves it by an appeal to *S'ruti* and *Smṛti* which are the highest authority on the subject. The *Vēda* as the very breath of Brahman is self-valid and is eternal, infallible and impersonal. It is a body of spiritual truths which are spiritually discernible ; and it is in the light of the *Vēda* which is the idea and word of God that cosmic creation proceeds. Brahma by his *tapas* intuits the *Vēdic* truths of the world-order and creates the *ṛṣis* or *mantra-draṣṭas* who are blessed with an insight into the inner meaning of *Vēdic mantras* and hymns which are hidden at the end of the *yugas*. Says the *S'ruti* : " By means of the *Vēda*, Prajāpati or Brahma evolved names and forms."[1] *Smṛti* derived from *S'ruti* also says : " In the beginning there was sent forth by the creator the eternal word of the *Vēda* and from it there originated all creations."[1] " He created from the words of the *Vēda* the whole world of

[1] *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 332.

names, works and shapes of all things." [1] S'aṅkara whose exposition of the *Sūtras* in this matter is not much different from that of Rāmānuja, says that, before the creation the *Vēdic* words (" re-issues of an eternal edition ") became manifest in the mind of the creator and then he created the things corresponding to those words.[2] Plato had a faint glimpse of the truth in his theory of *ideas* and archetypes of things. The *Vēdāntin* dismisses the *sphōṭa vāda* of the grammarian which holds that there is a supersensuous entity known as *sphōṭa* which is manifested by the letters of the word and which manifests its meaning as the object of auditory perception. This *sphōṭa* is as much a fiction as the *adṛṣṭa* of the *Naiyāyika* and the *niyōga* of the *Mīmāmsaka*. Owing to the eternity of the *Vēda* as the word of God, there originate eternal species like *dēvas* and other cosmic deities. At the beginning of a new *sṛṣṭi*, Brahman manifests the *Vēdas* in exactly the same order as they were before and entrusts to Brahma the new creation of the different classes of gods and other beings just as they were before. The *Vēdic* words like Indra and Agni are not conventional marks of identification but denote by their own power particular species of beings.[3] Indras come and go, but *indratva* with its class characteristics is eternal and Brahma recollecting the *Vēdic* meaning of the class concept creates a new Indra satisfying the requirements. In this way Brahman, the absolute, with the creative urge becomes the infinity of sentient and non-sentient beings and enters into them as their inner Self. The changeless and perfect evolves into the world-body of *cit* and *acit* and becomes the changing world without losing its purity and

[1] *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 332.

[2] *S'aṅkara, Bhāṣya, S. B. E.*, Vol. XXXIV, p. 204.

[3] *S. B.*, I. iii. 27.

perfection.[1] This *Vēdāntic* view of creation has the supreme merit of positing the reality of the cosmic order and the uniformity of nature in every *sṛṣṭi*. *Praḷaya* and *sṛṣṭi* form a regular succession of involution and evolution and bring out the rhythmic perfection of the cosmic plan. This view ensures the unity of the universe and its uniformity and stability and at the same time provides for novelty and infinite individual variations.

The cosmic order is also a moral order and, though the highest divinity is omnipotent, and by the fiat of His will can make the world the worst of all worlds, He is not capricious and cruel. It is the favourite theme of the atheist and the monist to dwell on the evils of life and cosmic injustice resulting in unmerited suffering and waste of virtue. No merciful divinity would create a world so full as ours is of evils of all kinds like poverty, ignorance, warfare, disease and death. "Why should vice triumph over virtue and life live on death ?" is the cry of the bruised heart, which is as old as creation. The absolutist pities *Īs'vara* on account of His being a magnified *samsārin*. If the finite self suffers from the ills of finite life, the infinite self should *a fortiori* subject itself to the infinite evils and sufferings of all *jīvas*. The atheist and the antitheist relying on the verdict of *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* and on pseudo-scientific evidence deny the fact of religious experience. But the *Vēdāntic* monist, who seeks the support of *s'āstra* to prove his *siddhānta* is not fair to himself, when he accepts *Īs'vara* as a *s'āstraic* necessity and rejects Him by following *Mādhyamika* dialectics and allying himself with the free-thinker. The *Sūtrakāra* takes his stand on *Vēdic* authority and denies the sceptic view that there is

[1] *S. B.*, I, iv, 27 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 403.

cruelty and caprice in the divine nature.[1] He admits the inequalities of life but traces them to the *karma* of the *jīvas*. As Parās'ara puts it, " *Īs'vara* is the operative cause only in the creation of new beings ; the material cause is constituted by the *karma* of the *jīvas* to be created."[2] The activity of the *jīva* no doubt proceeds from the Supreme Self, which is his inner Ruler, but at the same time, His omnipotence is self-limited by His righteousness. *Īs'vara*, as the moral ruler of the world, dispenses justice according to the nature of the *karma* resulting from the free will of the *jīva*. The Lord makes the soul act having regard to its past *karma*, whether meritorious or non-meritorious.[3] Every person is primarily responsible for his conduct and it is morally unjustifiable to throw the blame on supernatural agencies or on the highest Lord. The cosmic system has a moral foundation and *Īs'vara* is *Īs'vara* only because He is righteous. The sun shines on all alike. Rain is the common cause for different kinds of vegetation and the inequalities in their growth cannot be traced to it. Likewise divine justice is the same to all, and it reigns supreme in the kingdom of moral experience.

A new objection may be raised that the idea of a divine purpose contained in the *Upaniṣad* " It willed 'Let me become many' "[4] is self-contradictory and argues imperfection in *Īs'vara*. The word purpose refers to an end that is not yet attained, and therefore it affects the perfection of Brahman.

[1] vaiṣamya nairghṛṇyē na sāpēkṣatvāt tathā hi dars'ayati.—*S. S.*, II, i. 34.

[2] nimittamātramēvāsau sṛjyānām sargakarmaṇi I
pradhānakāraṇībhūtaḥ yatōvai sṛjyas'aktayaḥ II
nimittamātram muktvaiva nānyatkiñcidapēkṣatē I
niyatē tapatām s'rēṣṭa svas'aktyā vastu vastutām II—*V. P.*, I. iv, 51, 52.

[3] *S. B.*, II. ii. 3 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 488.

[4] tad aikṣata bahu syām.—*Ch. Up.*, VI, ii. 3.

But this criticism is controverted by the fact that the will of *Īśvara* is different from the will of the *jīva* just as the constellation bearing the name of the dog differs from the canine species. The wishes of the divine Self are eternally fulfilled, and every purpose is immediately fulfilled. As the Lord says in the *Gītā*, "There is nothing in the three worlds that remains to be done by me nor anything unattained that might be attained." [1] The motive that prompts the Lord to the creation of a world comprising all kinds of sentient and non-setient beings depending on His volition is nothing else but sport or *līlā*. The *Sūtrakāra* therefore says that what is called the creation, sustenance and destruction of the world by *Īśvara* is mere sport. The creation of the world is really an act of recreation of sportive spontaneity on the part of the divine Actor or Artist. The logical and moral ideas of Brahman as the *upādāna* and *nimitta kāraṇa* of the universe is now transfigured into the aesthetic idea of *līlā*. This view was fully developed in the chapter on aesthetic philosophy. There it was shown that the creative act is the purposeless purpose of the *sat* as the *bhuvanasundara* to make beauties out of nature and the self and enjoy the art of beauty. The universe is a divine comedy and it is the play of the Artist as *kapaṭa nāṭaka sūtradhāra* that fully satisfies the sense of humour arising from the infinite becoming the finite and ends with the aesthetic joy that the finite experiences when it becomes united with the infinite.

A brief reference to the western theories of Evolution and Emergence enables us to avoid their confusions and have a clear grasp of the distinction between the happenings in

[1] na mē pārthāsti kartavyam triṣu lōkēṣu kiñcana I
nānavāptamavāptavyam varta ēva ca karmaṇi II—*B. G.*, III. 22.

nature, the moral and spiritual conduct of the self and the inner purpose of *Is'vara* as the creator, sustainer and redeemer of the universe. The evolution of matter is not an ascending movement having the promise and potency of spiritual perfection, nor is it an impediment to the creative impulse of the spirit. Matter is not a bare monad or congealed spirit just as spirit is not an offshoot of matter. The naturalistic view like the nebular theory affirms the ultimate reality of matter and explains life, consciousness and personality as the by-products of physico-chemical changes. According to the theory of natural selection, variation and heredity, the living comes from the non-living and mind evolves from life; life is an adjustment to the environment and the fittest alone survives in the struggle for existence. The theory makes nature hostile to morals and the world a gladiatorial show. The theories of emergence are opposed to the principle that evolution is only the unfolding of what was already implicit, but there is difference in the explanation of the source of the emergence. According to the theory of Alexander, the nature of space-time is an ultimate fact from which new qualities like life and mind emerge, and the next higher stage in the historic growth of the world is the nisus towards deity. Another theory, as held by Lloyd Morgan, accepts God as the nisus through whose activity emergents emerge and is thus less naturalistic, while Whitehead refers to a realm of eternal objects which require God as the principle of concretion for achieving actuality and thus abandons naturalism entirely. The view is further developed by distinguishing between the absolute which is infinite possibility and God as possibility actualized. The pan-logical absolutism of Hegel insists on the principle that in evolution the implicit alone becomes the explicit and that Reality is the gradual dialectic unfolding in a rhythmic

way of the One that goes out of itself and then returns to itself. Absolutism in its transcendental aspect, like that of Bradley, points to Reality as pure consciousness which somehow divides itself into finite centres and gradually becomes the world of empirical experience. Naturalism and absolutism agree in destroying the autonomy of ethical religion and explaining away the existence of the self and God as mere emergents or appearances. But a true theory of cosmology has to recognize the reality of nature, self and God by avoiding the extremes of naturalism, personalism and singularism. Nature as *prakṛti* or *kṣētra* evolves into the world, but is not itself purposive. It serves the purpose of *Is'vara* as a suitable medium for the perfection of the *puruṣa*. The *puruṣa* or *jīva* is an eternal entity distinct from *prakṛti* and its evolution is not a mere becoming or happening, but a self-choice of infinite forms of life as god, man or animal till it discovers or recovers itself. *Īs'vara* is distinct from both and is the immanent ground of the evolutionary process of nature and the transcendent goal of the moral progress of the *jīva*.

The ultimate meaning of cosmology is spiritual and mystic, and the universe may be described as a place of *mukta* making. The *Sadvidyā* is a *Brahmavidyā* and the *Upaniṣadic* motive in putting the qestion : "What is that *ādēs'a* [1] by knowing which everything else is known ?" is to turn S'vētakētu the philosopher into a *mumukṣu*. Rāmānuja explains cosmology in terms of the *s'arīra-s'arīri* relation. Brahman in all its states has souls and matter for its body ; when they are subtle, Brahman is in the causal condition, and

[1] uta tam ādēs'am aprākṣyō yēna as'rutaṃ s'rutaṃ bhavati amataṃ mataṃ avijñātaṃ vijñātaṃ I—*Ch. Up.*, VI, i. 3.

when they are in the gross state, Brahman is in the effected state and is called the world. There is no confusion in the nature of *acit*, *cit* and Brahman, as non-sentient matter is ever changing, sentient souls are liable to suffering, and Brahman is ever pure and perfect. Brahman is Nārāyaṇa with *cit* and *acit* as His *s'arīra* and He created the *naras* and placed His seed of immortality in them. As the Lord of lords and the Creator of creators, He is free from blemish and ever blissful, and it is the essential nature of Brahman to brahmanize the self and impart His entire bliss to it. *Sṛṣṭi* is the evolution of the cosmic purpose and *praḷaya* is the involution and reversal of the whole process, and the two alternate like the waking and sleep states of the *jīva*. *Sṛṣṭi* provides an environment for the evolving self to grow into godliness and *praḷaya* is the withdrawal of the instruments of activity when the Lord finds that the self chooses the way of darkness and sin, and there is moral corruption and spiritual death in the world. In this way, the process is repeated till the *jīva* realizes the folly of its self-alienation, and returns to its home in the absolute. The freed self withdraws itself for ever from the twenty-four *tattvas* of *prakṛti* in the same way in which it entered into them and became practically a mode of matter. Being Brahman He becomes Brahman.[1] When the seer sees the brilliant Self he shakes off *avidyā-karma*, realizes his self as the *prakāra* or *s'arīra* of Brahman and becomes a *mukta*. S'vētakētu is thus made to realize that the *sat* without a second which differentiates into the universe as its *s'arīrin* is identical with the Self that is the *s'arīrin* of his own spiritual nature. The 'that' or the *sat* is the Self of S'vētakētu, and it is to the immortal glory of the *Upaniṣads* that they declare the identity of Brahman as the cosmological subject with the inner *ātman* of the

[1] brahmaīva san brahmāpyēti.

individual self and thus reveal the mystic unity between *Paramātman* and the *jīvātman* as summed up in the *Sūtra* : " in non-division or *avibhāga*"[1] Says the *Gītā* : " At the end of many births in the universe, the wise man reaches me, saying ' All is Vāsudēva.' "[2]

The full religious value of meditating on Brahman as the cosmic Highest is brought out in the tenth book of the *Bhāgavata* and the fifth chapter of the *Rahasyatraya Sāra* of Vēdānta Dēs'ika. The former extols Brahman as *satyātmaka*, *satyasya satya* and *trisatya*. That He is the soul and saviour of the universe with *cit-acit* as His *s'arīra* is expressed by Vēdānta Dēs'ika in his literal and symbolic description of the formless Form. In that beatific Form the *jīva* is the jewel *Kaustubha*, *mūlaprakṛti* is *S'rīvatsa* and the five weapons for preserving righteousness are *mahat*, *ahaṅkāra*, and the *indriyas*. The idea of the *jīva* abiding in the heart of Reality as Redeemer furnishes the *raison-de-etre* for universal salvation.[3]

[1] avibhāgēna dṛṣṭatvāt,—*S. S.*, IV. iv. 4.

[2] bahūnām janmanām antē jñānavān mām prapadyatē I
vāsudēvassarvamiti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ II—*B. G.*, VII. 19.

[3] satyavratam satyaparam trisatyam satyasya yōnim nihitañca satyē I
satyasya satyam ṛtasatyanētram satyātmakam tvām s'araṇam prapannāḥ II
Bhāgāvata, X. i. 27 and *Rahasyatraya Sāra* (Narasimhachariar's edition, p. 238).

CHAPTER XI

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE *JĪVA*

THE metaphysical knowledge of Brahman as the sole reality or *tattva* is followed by an enquiry into the *hita* or *upāya* which is the means of attaining Him. But a knowledge of the spiritual self or *ātman* is essential to practical *Vēdāntic* culture, and the psychological study of the *ātman* has therefore a unique value and meaning in determining the nature of such culture. *Vēdāntic* psychology is not an empirical science that follows the method of mere perceptual and conceptual knowledge, but is founded on metaphysical and metapsychical analysis which relies more on the introspective, than on the genetic, method to find out the essential nature of selfhood. The nature of the *ātman* is discovered by *yōgic* intuition and not by the method of behaviourism, psycho-analysis or ideational construction. The self is *sui generis* and perseveres in its own selfhood, though materialism makes it a mode of matter and absolutism depersonalizes it and makes it phenomenal and fictitious. Philosophy, western as well as eastern, has not fully recognized the eternity of the self and its intrinsic moral and spiritual worth. *Visiṣṭādvaitic* psychology is founded on the authority of the *Upaniṣads*, the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā* and the inner experience, *ātmānubhava* or experience of the self. The western

terms, 'spirit' and 'soul,' have no definite meaning and are often conceived in an animistic and anthropomorphic sense. The physical object is often invested with life and spirit, personified and endowed with human feelings and strivings. Even the term 'self,' though metaphysically more adequate than the terms 'spirit' and 'soul,' does not bring out the primacy of what is called the *ātman* as contrasted with religious consciousness and the ontology of the *Paramātman*. The *Vēdāntic* term '*ātman*' as expounded in the *Sūtras* and in the first six chapters of the *Gītā* is therefore to be preferred to the terms 'spirit,' 'soul' and 'self,' in *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* nomenclature. The nature of the *ātman* will be determined first dialectically by examining certain faulty definitions. The meaning of its *dharmabhūta-jñāna* along with the three functions of cognition, conation and feeling and the abnormal and supranormal states of consciousness will then be considered in the light of *Vēdāntic* thought aided by the method of psychology.

The concept of *ātman* is more easily explained by what it is not than by what it is and by a criticism of the negative definitions, the positive meaning may be reconstructed. The *Dēhātmavādin* or materialist who holds that the body is the self, or the physical philosopher, with his aversion for metaphysics, insists on the priority and potency of matter and explains away the self as an epiphenomenon and superfluity. To use the *Cārvāka's* well-known analogy, like the red colour produced by the mixture of the betel leaf, areca nut and lime, the combination of the five elements creates the self. The self is said to be a fortuitous concourse of atoms. The brain secretes consciousness in the same way as the liver secretes bile. The materialist establishes the physical basis of the self by the positive test that the self lives when the

four-elemental body lives and by the negative test that, when the body disintegrates and dies, the self also dies. He thus denies the pre-natal existence of the self and its survival after death. The naturalist, as a refined materialist, explains the higher by the lower, by tracing the self to sensation, sensation to cellular activity and cellular activity to physico-chemical changes. Personality is a product of evolution by natural selection. Materialism has a seductive charm owing to its epicurean appeal. But the concept of the self is central to psychic unity. The self is a *vera causa* and not a mere assemblage of atoms and physical changes. It has its own primacy and purposiveness which cannot be accounted for by the category of *pradhāna*, and no material thing is known to think and to seek for *mukti* or liberation. The mechanistic concept of the self is exploded by the biological category of life. The *Prāṇātmavādin* contends that the soul is *prāṇa* (vital breath). In the presence of *prāṇa*, the self is present, and in its absence it is dissolved. Vitalism allied to *Prāṇaism* holds that life is an inner activity that has the character of self-maintenance and self-multiplication. It is therefore preferable to the mechanical view. While matter repeats itself, life is spontaneous and creative. But the theory that it is an entelechy or non-mechanical agency midway between matter and mind is a hypothesis that cannot be verified. The *Indriyātmavādin*, who holds that the senses form the self, and the sensationalist maintain that the self is constituted by the *indriyas*, on the basis of perceptual evidence, which, according to them, is the only test of truth; it is the cognitive and conative sense organs that cause sensations and the self is only a cluster of these sensations. Even in introspection, when we seek for the self, we stumble on a particular perception. But the self

has a synthetic unity and configuration which sensationalist psychology cannot explain. Each sense organ has its specific function; the eye cannot hear and the ear cannot see, and the unity of the experiencing self cannot be attributed to the manifold given in sense-knowledge. If knowledge is to be considered as only of external origin, the psychic experience of dreams would remain unexplained. The term *dēha* or body includes the subtle and the gross elements of *prakṛti*, and the self survives after death, because the *liṅga s'arīra* or subtle body is not dissolved with the dissolution of the gross body. The *Sūkṣmadēhātmavādin*, therefore, maintains that the self is not merely the gross body but includes also the potential body. But the *dēhī* or embodied self is different from its embodiment, both in its potential and in its actual condition. The mentalist or the *Antaḥkaraṇavādin* goes a step further and argues that, without the *a priori* synthetic unity of the mind or *antaḥkaraṇa*, psychic experience would lose ground and become chaotic. Unity is implied in experience and does not evolve from it. Atomistic psychology explains the mind as an aggregation of isolated sensations in terms of the laws of association and starts with the manifold of sense, but fails to reduce it to unity or give it a meaning. Psycho-analysis is, on the other hand, a deeper study of consciousness as it lays bare its different levels, explores the interior of the mind and traces consciousness from the unconscious states. The normal and the sub-normal are related, and in dreams, the sub-conative tendencies and repressed desires come to the surface and are fulfilled. But the account given by the psycho-analysts, of moral and religious life in terms of repressed sex and the Oedipus complex fails to recognize the inner dignity of life. Psycho-analysts trace moral worth to morbid conditions. Metapsychics is a more critical enquiry into consciousness, as it

includes a study of its abnormal and also supra-normal states. In the background of consciousness are embedded the sub-conscious and the super-conscious, and *yōgic* psychology works out scientifically the infinite possibility of consciousness and the supermind. But even this unfolding of the mental life relates only to the attributive consciousness of the *jīva* and not to the *jīva* itself. Psychology without a psyche or self is inconceivable, like playing *Hamlet* without the prince of Denmark. Buddhistic psychology, likewise, describes the mental process and denies the existence of an enduring self. Consciousness arises according to Buddhism, by way of cause and effect and is an unbroken flux like the flow of a river. No person can step twice into the same river as fresh waters are ever flowing past him. The self is only a *saṅghāta* or aggregation and it is an ever-fleeting flux without any substantiality or causal power. Mental activity is a psycho-physical process and is a continual phenomenal happening without any static being as the substratum. The so-called self is a series made of the five agreegates or *skandhas* consisting of the body, consciousness, perception, feeling and will. In the light of the law of becoming by cause and effect, the past flows into the present and conditions the future without any intermission. Re-birth is itself a becoming without a transmigrating entity. The transmission of light from one lamp to another is only a change of energy and does not mean transmigration from lamp to lamp. This Buddhistic psychology is untenable as its phenomenalism leads to nihilism. The self cannot be known by the cinematographic method of studying the varying and vanishing presentations. Buddhistic ethics is equally faulty as there can be no deed without a doer who is free and immortal. Finally its philosophy of no-self and *nirvāṇa* is a denial not only of theodicy but also of

cosmodicy, the existence of a cosmos, and leads to *S'ūnyavāda* or the theory of universal void. Knowledge stultifies itself, if it does not presuppose as its ground a knowing or rational self. Rationalism accepts reason as the *a priori* principle of knowledge. The most certain knowledge that occurs to one who philosophizes in a clear and distinct way is the self-evident truth that thinking implies a thinker. As Descartes puts it 'I think, therefore I am.' The self is a thinking unextended thing distinct from the body and from the qualities derived from sense experience and is its own proof or evidence. The rationalist offers a more adequate view of the self than the empiricist but his view is not adequate enough, as it does not include the other functions of *manas* like *citta* and *ahaṅkāra.* It does not define the exact nature of personality as distinct from *buddhi* or reason, nor does it recognize the graduated, progressive series of selves from the lowest amoeba to the highest Brahma. This spiritual evolution is not analogous to the unfolding of the monads from the bare monad of matter to the monad of monads, namely, God. The concept of the self is different from that of the material atom and of the metaphysical monad and is founded on the distinction between the *cētana* or the spiritual and the *acētana* or the material. By way of summing up, it may be concluded that the self is not *dēha, indriya, prāṇa, manas* or *buddhi* though it uses all these as its instruments of expression.

The concept of the self as formulated in western thought may be determined by distinguishing its different meanings. The 'I' as the subject self is contrasted by William James with the 'me' as the object self arising from the identification of the self with all its belongings. The latter is the sum total of all that a man can call his, including his body, his clothes, his

house and the whole range of other things which are called his property. But the metaphysical 'I' is different from the empirical 'me' as it persists in its being, even after it is stripped of all its possessions. The former is self-originated and the latter is secondary and has only an economic or market value. Spiritual experience is of the form 'I am the self and have a body' and not 'I am the body and I have the self.' The self is sometimes defined as a simple substance, as a substratum of qualities, as a thing-in-itself, or as a something we know not what. If the self is a thing-in-itself, we cannot know it and are landed in scepticism; if, to avoid this impasse, it is held that it is only a bundle of qualities, we cannot escape the charge of phenomenalism. The category of substance and qualities is a logical distinction which does not strictly apply to spiritual experience. The self as an individual is said to be an instance of the universal which pervades its individual character. The judgment of history is regarded as a half-way house between the perceptual which refers to the thing and the universal which refers to the concept. But individuality has a uniqueness which cannot be exhausted by universals. As it does not repeat a type, it eludes the grasp of science and does not admit of generalization. On the principle of the identity of indiscernibles, no two real beings are exactly the same. The idea of wholeness fails to do justice to the integral unity of the self and its inner purposiveness. The self is not an arithmetical unit but is a metaphysical unity. The category of quality and causality is only empirically valid and has no transcendental use. The term self-consciousness presupposes selfhood and it is by reflection and introspection that self-knowledge is attained. In the subject-object relation, the object is not invariably the

material thing or non-ego opposed to the self but is also a spiritual entity admitting of inter-subjective intercourse without any loss of content. The world of space-time is given and is not a mental construction super-imposed on things. Likewise, the self as the subject of experience is in itself and is not derived from outside and does not change into another. The self is different from the material object and the two are equally real, though materialism denies the primacy of the self and personalism denies the thing or object.

The self is its own evidence and its continued existence is self-posited and not proved by metaphysical tests. It is more true to say that because I am, therefore I think, than to say that because I think, therefore I am. The self does not always think and there are deep layers of thought including the self-conscious, the unconscious, the abnormal and the supra-normal states. Its persistence in all these states is indicated by the fact of memory, recognition and spiritual self-feeling, though this unity is broken up in trances and alternations and dissociations of personality caused by drugs and psycho-physical disorders. An ethical distinction is sometimes drawn between individuality and personality. The former is said to refer to the irrational animal nature in man when he is drawn by inclination and the latter connotes the self-legislative character of the rational self and its freedom from servitude to matter. The first view regards the self as a thing which is a means to an end and the second, as a person who is an end unto himself, but not ego-centric. To the sociologist, the self is an element of the social organism or community. But a free society is not an organized community but a communion of free selves as persons. Each self exists in itself and also for others by shedding its

exclusiveness. From the real metaphysical standpoint, the self abides in its own being without being depersonalized by the matter of the materialist or the absolute of the monist. Its self-identity is not to be confused with bodily and psychical continuity, as the self is a spiritual entity different from the material changes of the organism or mind-body. It has uniqueness like a monad,[1] but is not a spiritual atom, as its all-pervasive consciousness is opposed to monadic exclusiveness or windowless nature; this view is not personalistic, as personalism denies the existence of physical things. The self is not a mode of the absolute, if modal being denies the unique existence of the self. The adjectival theory of the self which defines it as adjectival to ultimate reality, as its connection of content or as an eternal differentiation of the absolute, also suffers from the defect of denying the uniqueness of the spiritual self. The monistic contention that the self betrays a fissure between the 'that' and the 'what' is equally indefensible. The concept of the self is not a vicious circle in the sense that the self is the construction of thought and that thought is a state of the self. The monist himself admits that the absolute somehow divides itself into finite centres and that the self is not an element of the absolute but is a member thereof. Lastly, from the eschatological standpoint, the self is an entity different from the mind-body and the sensible and intelligible world and therefore the theories of interaction and parallelism and one-sided action have no value. The self is not only immortal but is also eternal and its value is never destroyed. The creationist view that the self is created out of nothing at the time of birth is as repugnant as the nihilistic view that it is annulled at the time of the death of the body.

[1] *S. B.*, II. iii. 20 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 546.

The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* view of the *ātman* as a knowing subject or *jñātā*[1] is clearer and more distinct than the western concepts of the self, spirit and soul and is free from animistic associations and the difficulties arising from the problem of the relation between mind and body. By adopting *Sāṅkhyan* psychology, *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* defines the self negatively as the *puruṣa* different from the twenty-four categories of *prakṛti*. The latter is composed of the five gross elements or *bhūtas*, the five subtle elements or *tanmātras*, the five cognitive sense organs, the five conative sense organs, *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra* and primal *prakṛti*. *Puruṣa* is the twenty-fifth category and is termed the higher *prakṛti* on account of its spiritual value. The *Gītā* states the truth more briefly by defining the body as the *kṣētra* or field of knowledge composed of the five gross elements with the five subtle elements, *manas* with the ten sense organs, *ahaṅkāra*, *buddhi* and *avyakta* or the primal matter-stuff. The *ātman* is the *kṣētrajña*[2] or knower of the field of knowledge. The subject of experience is as different from the object as a person is different from his dwelling place. Owing to the false identification of the self with the body, it is called the empirical self or *dēhī* and its life is influenced by the three *guṇas* of *prakṛti*, namely *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. As the *dēha* is composed of the elements of *prakṛti*, it is also subject to decomposition and is therefore mutable or *asat* and perishable or *vinās'i* while the *ātman* is immutable or *sat* and indestructible or *avinās'i*. This exposition has, however, no bearing on the *satkāryavāda*. The *ātman* is eternal or *nitya*[3] and stable or *s'ās'vata*. The six changes of the body or *ṣadvikāras* like birth, childhood and

[1] *S. B.*, II. iii. 19 and *S. B. E.* XLVIII, p. 546.
[2] *S. G.* VII. 5 and XII, 2 and 6.
[3] *Kaṭh. Up.*, I. ii. 18.

age are the *pariṇāmic* changes of *prakṛti*; and the *ātman* is never tainted by the *guṇas* of *prakṛti*. It is therefore *nirguṇa*. The empirical self puts on a body at birth and puts it off at death when it is worn out. Fire does not consume the *ātman*, water does not wet it and air does not dry it.[1] It slays not another *ātman* nor is slain by any.[2] It cannot be perceived by the senses (*avyakta*) nor conceived of (*acintya*).[3] The *ātman* cannot be logically proved (*aprameya*) as it is the basis of proof (*apramātṛ*). It works through the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) to obtain knowledge or *jñana*. The nature of the *ātman* is thus difficult to know and therefore it arouses philosophical wonder (*ās'caryavat*).[4] What cannot be logically defined in terms of genus and differentia can be defined only in terms of experience by direct intuition or *ātmānubhava* as the eternal knower or subject of experience. Owing to *avidyā-karma*, the *ātman* mistakes itself for the *anātman*, is entangled in *samsārā* and migrates from body to body, from the butterfly to Brahma. But it is really changeless, pure and eternal.

The *ātman* is self-illuminated (*svayaṃprakās'a*) and its intelligence is both substantive and adjectival or attributive. While the *ātman* exists by and for itself (*pratyak*),[5] its *dharmabhūta-jñāna* exists for another (*parāk*), *i.e.*, for the *ātman*. The *ātman* is self-realized and at the same time the subject of *jñāna* or *jñānās'raya*. Selfhood is knowledge of itself, but *jñāna* is knowledge about the objects. The former is *dharmijñāna* and

[1] nainam chindanti s'astrāṇi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ
na cainam klēdayanti āpō na s'oṣayati mārutaḥ.—*S. G.*, II. 23.
[2] nāyam hanti na hanyatē. *S. G.*, II. 19.
[3] avyaktōyam acintyōyam.—*S. G.*, II. 25.
[4] ās'caryavatpas'yati kas'cid ēnam.—*B. G.*, II. 29.
[5] *Y. M. D.*, VIII.

the latter *dharmabhūtajñana* and the two are inseparable. Self-experience or *ātmānubhava* is different from the experiences of the self as the expression of its consciousness. While the *jīva* is infinitesimal in its monadic existence, its attributive *jñāna* can be infinite and all-pervasive like the light of the sun[1]. The self is infinitely smaller than the hundredth part of the point of a hair divided a hundred times and yet it is infinite in its range.[2] The infinitesimal *ātman* is known to have more potentiality than the stars above, and the infinitesimal and the infinite are ultimately alike. The *jīva* is windowless in the sense that it perseveres in its unique being; but its consciousness is capable of having a cosmic range and can mirror the whole universe. Like light and its luminosity, the centre of a circle and its circumference, the *ātman* and its *jñāna* are logically distinguishable, but not physically separable. If consciousness were considered as a complex of qualities without the self as its subject or basis, it would lead to Buddhistic phenomenalism and nihilism, just as the theory of the self being without attributive intelligence leads to the *Vais'ēṣika* view in which the self finally lapses into the unconscious as a blank state. The *ātman* without *jñāna* would be void of content and *jñāna* without the *ātman* would be chaotic and meaningless. The two are organically related and form an illustration of the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* truth that, though a substance or *dravya* is logically defined as the locus or basis of attributes (*avasthās'raya*), it may have a unique value in *Vēdānta* as *dravya*. This value is justified by the law of relativity and perspective and the same thing may be viewed as attribute from one standpoint and as substance from another. *Jñāna* is the determining quality of the *ātman*; but it is also

[1] *S.B.*, II. iii. 26 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 549.

[2] *S'vēt. Up.*, v. 9.

substantive as it is subject to the changes of contraction and expansion. It is eternal and all-pervasive ; but in the empirical state of *saṃsāra* it is enveloped by *avidyā-karma* and undergoes contraction and expansion (*saṅkōca* and *vikāsa*). *Jñāna* is ever identical with itself though its manifestations are liable to change. It changes without losing its nature and remains the same entity. In the state of *mukti*, *jñāna* regains its essential state and is eternal and infinite. Consciousness, which is now finite and conditioned, has therefore the possibility of becoming inflnite or super-mind. Owing to its unity and continuity, it is a continuous affirmation of the self. In perceptual knowledge, it is particularized and is given as a this-now. But it is not really a bit of *jñāna* as an isolated and exclusive state, as all conscious states are interrelated : only a section of the whole is selected or abstracted in the interests of practical life. In the higher stages of scientific and philosophic thinking, consciousness is more articulate and expansive. Consciousness is a continuum and is really cosmic. What is given in the normal waking state as a distinct thought is only a stratum or section and it is continuous with, and shades off into what is dim in the sub-conscious and the distant in the unconscious state. Even the abnormal and the supra-normal states are but layers of the ocean of consciousness, and finally, in the state of *mukti* when the conditionateness of *karma* is destroyed, it returns to itself and shines for ever as infinite consciousness or the ocean pacific in a supersensuous and supra-rational realm.

Jñāna is the differentia or *svarūpanirūpaka dharma* of the *jīva* and is synonymous with *prajñā*, *mati* and *mēdhā*. It manifests itself in numberless ways in the subject-object relations into which it enters as well as in the subjective

life. They may all be included in the usual tripartite division of knowing, feeling and willing and this division is adequate to the empirical description of the *jīva* as *jñātā* or knower, *bhōktā* or enjoyer and *kartā* or doer. They are not isolated facts of experience, but are factors of all-inclusive consciousness. True psychology is not genetic or empirical as, according to its method of starting with reflex action and sensation and ending with reflection, the self lacks inner synthetic unity. The method has to be reversed in the light of *ātmaniṣtic* psychology which relies on the philosophic method of tracing the particulars as expressions of their underlying unity and discovering the whole of knowledge which is its soul. *Jñāna* is not a mere contiuuum or a synthesis, but is the integral consciousness of the self and is more than its partial expressions of cognition, feeling and conation. The self is different from the knowing processes and is presupposed in the subject-object consciousness. As a knowing subject it is different from the *Vais'ēṣika* view of it as substance and also from the *Sāṅkhyan* concept of the *puruṣa*. The Kānāda theory regards intelligence as an adventitious quality and the *jīva* in its essence as being non-intelligent like a piece of stone. The *Sāṅkhyan* theory of the *puruṣa* as an indifferent spectator is equally futile as it is a knower that knows nothing and does nothing. If the *jīva* is the reflection of Brahman in *avidyā*, it would only be a semblance of reality, and spiritual striving would then be a mere make-believe and there would be no *jñāna* or *jñāni*. Transcendental *jñāna* devoid of content is a transcendental illusion, and thought would become a vacuum. But the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* exposition of the *dharmī-dharma* relation between the *ātman* and its *jñāna* rescues knowledge from scepticism and solipsism. The denial of the *guṇa* or *dharma* is the denial of the *guṇin* or *dharmin* itself. There

can be no quality without the substance possessing it, no experience without an experiencing entity. As *jñāna* is invariably conjoined with *manas* which is its instrument of objective knowledge, it is often identified with it in a figurative way. When *jñāna* functions as a cognitional process, it is described as reasoning and includes the stages of scientific and philosophic knowledge. It stresses the nature of the logical ego employing the criteria of truth and the *pramāṇas*, with a view to discriminating between truth and falsity including *saṃs'aya* (doubt), *viparyaya* (wrong opinion), *bhrama* (illusion), and *durmati* (false knowledge), by means of *vivēka* (discrimination) and seeking *s'rēyas* or final beatitude. The view that the self is merely rational, would lapse into the evils of intellectualism and this defect is removed by the ethical concept of the *jīva* as *kartā*.[1] Consciousness is conative and every fact of knowledge is also an act of the ethical ego. Every judgment involves the factors of *karma* and *kartā* and this moral experience presupposes the primacy and freedom of the will. Self-consciousness as will is free activity or self-caused change and is not an unconscious striving or a moral process which is externally determined. The inequalities of moral life with all its hazards and hardships are entirely traceable to the responsibility of the finite self and not to *prakṛti* or *Īs'vara*. The very term *s'āstra* implies the existence of moral freedom in worldly and *Vēdic* conduct and the imperative of duty. If purposive activity belonged to *prakṛti* and not to the *jīva*, then it would follow that, since *prakṛti* belongs to all, all actions would be experienced by all *jīvas* and the uniqueness of personal experience would be destroyed.[2] Matter is not known to meditate on

[1] *S.B.*, II. iii. 33 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 553.
[2] *S.B.*, II. iii. 36 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 555.

itself and become desirous of liberation. If activity were determined by the divine will, the self would only be an automaton or a conduit-pipe of the cosmic purpose which would then appear capricious and cruel, and freedom of the will would be an illusory fiction. The acceptance of passivity and of the fatalistic theory itself is an act of free will. Moral freedom implies deliberation, when there is a conflict of desires, and decision. In the process of deliberation the self weighs alternative possibilities and oscillates between them, then the choice is made and the motive develops into a will and becomes an overt act. In this moral situation the self does not remain an indifferent spectator watching the conflict of motives and the triumph of the strongest motive, but identifies itself with the whole process as the doer doing the deed. Freedom is a skill or capacity as well as an activity and the *jīva* has moral freedom even if it does not exercise it actively just as a carpenter is a workman whether he uses his tools or not.[1] 'Ought' implies 'can' and the moral self can attain self-sovereignty or *svarājya* by subduing its animal inclinations consisting of instincts like self-assertion, anger, jealousy and fear, and choosing the ways of the *mumukṣu* including *bhakti* (devotion) and *prapatti* (self-surrender) or sink into animality by choosing the way of sensuality and becoming its slave. It can become a god or a dog and no being on earth or beyond can destroy its consciousness of freedom and initiative. But if morals be given priority over metaphysics and aesthetics, the result may lead to the evils or moralism, ending in the ritualism of the *Mīmāmsaka* and the rigorism of the Kantian view of morals and mere progressivism. The evils of intellectualism and voluntarism are avoided by recognizing the affective side of consciousness

[1] *S.B.*, II. iii. 39 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 556.

or feeling as being midway between cognition and conation and describing *jñāna* in terms of *bhōktṛtva* (the capacity for experiencing). Feeling is the essence of the empirical self as *bhōktā* (the experient) and pleasure-pain is the stuff of feeling and is regarded as its hedonistic tone. Every state of consciousness has feeling tone, which includes organic and bodily feeling, psychic feeling and the feeling caused by the reaction of the subject to the object that is presented to it.

James Ward distinguishes five meanings of feeling, namely a touch, an organic sensation, an emotion, a purely subjective state and the pure afiective state like the feeling of pleasure or pain. Of these the last is the most appropriate meaning implying a hedonistic tone. Feeling is not immediate, sentient experience which is infra-intellectual, inarticulate and confused, as there is no such self-sufficient feeling in the mental complex. The faculty psychology that maps out the mind-body into separate faculties is entirely faulty and out of date as it ignores the need for a synthetic knowledge of the whole self and the whole-making functions of its *jñāna*. Every sensation is significant and determinate. The affective tone of the specific sensations varies with their intensity, duration and quality. Pleasurable sensations promote organic life and welfare. Emotions like fear, anger, jealousy and sexual feeling have a wider range and greater persistence than a momentary feeling, and they cannot always be abstracted from their bodily expression. An emotional disposition is said to be a feeling in the presence of an object which persists and is different from the emotional mood which is mainly subjective. When an emotion qualifies a more stable centre, it is called a sentiment, like patriotism. A spiritual intuition is not mere feeling which is precognitive

and primitive but is supra-intellectual. What is known as the gregarious instinct brings out the nature of the *jīva* as the social self realized in its inter-subjective intercourse and spiritual communion. The highest sentiments of the social self are friendship (*maitrī*), mercy or benevolence (*dayā*), *bhakti* (devotion to God) and *prapatti* (self-surrender to God). The *ātman* as the material self is imprisoned in its mind-body or *sthūla* (gross) and *sūkṣma* (subtle) *s'arīra* and enjoys the pleasures of sense and sensibility. When its desires are rationalized by *vivēka*, it rises to a higher level of self-feeling and enjoys the happiness of self-realization. But when it intuits the Lord who is its inner Self, it enjoys eternal bliss.

The three states of consciousness are one continuous context and are not contradictory, and each state shades of without any gap or leap into innumerable other states which are equally real. *Dharmabhūtajñāna* with its possibility of becoming infinite has a unity and identity of content which runs through all its varying and vanishing presentations and is one single affirmation about the *dharmi* and is sustained by its intelligence. The analysis of *avasthātraya* or the three states is founded on the principle of the evolution and integration of consciousness and not on self-contradiction. Monistic *Vēdānta* interprets the consciousness of difference like that involved in sense-perception and the fanciful and fantastic states of the dream world, as a self-discrepancy requiring sublation. The subject-object relation that creates the dualistic experience is essential to knowledge and does not imply any dualism between reality and thought as is said to be involved in the *Advaitic* analysis of *avasthātraya.* When the self passes from the unconscious to the conscious, the transition is from the potential to the actual and from the subtle to the gross and it does not mark any stages

of reality. Just as childhood does not contradict youth, the unconscious state does not sublate the waking consciousness. *Vikāra* is not *vivarta* and passing from one state to another does not betray any inner perversity or misunderstanding. In our waking consciousness the self is aware of the external world which satisfies the practical needs of life and is the same to all individuals. The objective world of space-time is given as the common theatre of our actions and it is not a mental construction confined to finite thought. The world in which we all live and move is neither a mere course of consciousness as a perishing psychical state nor a significant idea having objective reference, but is external to the perceiving subject. Even the *Advaitin* is logically constrained to accept this view and reject the subjective idealism of the Buddhist. The philosophy of the objective does not, therefore, contradict commonsense but gives a deeper and wider view of it by its comprehensive insight. Our waking consciousness in its aspects of knowledge and will is double-edged as it presupposes the logical and moral subject which is the finite self and the world of space-time and sense-life which is the object of experience. The monist reverses the commonsense view when he seeks to explain the normal psychic experience of integration in terms of the abnormal process of disintegration and confusion and traces the genesis of both to *avidyā* and *adhyāsa*. If knowledge in all its levels including omniscience is attributed to nescience, scepticism will be the only inevitable result of such pan-illusionism.

But *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* affirms the reality of all cognitions, makes no radical distinction between the normal and the abnormal, and explains all changes of consciousness in a scientific and moral way. The self abides in its being in the

states of waking, dream and sleep including the so-called abnormal states of dissociation of personality and multiple personality and the supra-normal states of *yōgic* intuitions, super-mind and cosmic conciousness. The difference between waking and dreaming consists in the fact that the self is awake when it contacts the external world and is in the dreaming condition if it has broken away from the objective world which is common to all beings, and experiences a succession of memory images without logical coherence and co-ordination. Psychic presentations are not fantastic fabrications woven with the images of memory but are wonderful objects created by *Īs'vara* according to individual desert.[1] The prophetic character of dreams is further evidence of the divine creation of dream objects.[2] As pure subjective experience, dreams are of the nature of retribution whether as reward or as punishment for minor deeds,[3] and the subjective is as real as the objective. From the ethical point of view every dream is expiatory and its felling tone is determined by the conduct of the *jīva* that is morally judged. According to psycho-analysis, the subconative tendencies that are suppressed come to the surface in dreams and there is wish-fulfilment. But the term 'unconscious' employed in the method of psycho-analysis is vague and its sexual version of desire is not only inexplicable but is also repugnant to the moral consciousness. The ethical and religious significance of dream-psychology is completely ignored by psycho-analysis and subjectivism. When the self suffers from fatigue, it seeks relaxation and retires into the condition of sleep for recuperation of energy. The sleeping self puts off the tools of thought and the instruments of action

[1] *S. B.*, III. ii. 3 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 602.
[2] *S. B.*, III. ii. 6 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 604.
[3] *S. B.*, III. ii. 5 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 603.

and refreshes itself ; but even in that state, consciousness persists as a pontentiality like masculinity in a male child.[1] It is lulled to rest in the *nāḍis*, (nerve-centres) of the pericardium and is united there with the True or Brahman, the real resting place of the tired self.[2] Sleep is the period of repose and recuperation when the spent tissues are again built up ; *prāṇa* functions in sleep, when the mind and the sense organs are inactive, and maintains life. The view that waking is a realistic state and dream an idealistic creation followed often by presumed non-dual consciousness in perfect sleep is controverted by the fact that states are real *avasthās* and are not stages of sublation in which negation is negated. If the *avidyā*-ridden self progresses or regresses from the sheaths which make it *vis'va, taijasa* and *prajñā* and stultifies itself apparently in sleep and really in *ṭurīya*, pure consciousness will itself be sublated by the self, and all knowledge will be shipwrecked at the entrance to the harbour of the absolute. If the bliss of *samādhi* is allied to the bliss of sleep, no spiritual endeavour is needed to attain it as every one slides into sleep and lapses into the unconscious.[3] The logical conclusion of *Advaita* should be the denial of *mūlāvidyā* (original nescience) and *avasthātraya*. The *Advaitin*, however, fights shy of the philosophy of bare negation or *s'ūnya*, into which Buddhistic logic would force him, and makes a compromise with the realist. In describing the different *avasthās* of the self, the *Sūtras* nowhere refer to their self-contradictions and the need for sublation.

All the *avasthās* mark the transition of *jñāna* from the conscious to the sub-conscious and to the unconscious which are different states of *jñāna* determined by *karma*. Drowsiness,

[1] *S. B.*, II. iii. 31 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 551.
[2] *S. B.*, III. ii. 7 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 604.
[3] *Ch. Up.*, VIII. ii. I.

waking dreams and reverie form an interim stage between waking and dreaming. While psychology explains the normal process of integration, psychiatry deals with the opposite process of mental disruption as in the phenomena of hypnotism, multiple personalities and alternation of personalities. Hypnotism, whether self-induced or caused by another, is partial quiescence and is the result of concentration when some mental processes are suspended and others heightened. Hysteria is also a case of a break in the feeling of self and its unity. In cases of dissociation and alternation of personality, memory is paralysed by drug, disease or psycho-physical disorders in the *sthūla* and the *sūkṣma s'arīras* or gross and subtle bodies of the *jīva*. But when these counteracting causes are overcome, the unity of consciousness is restored and the self recognizes its identity based on *smṛti* or memory. Personal identity is a real psychological experience and is confirmed by the *Upaniṣad*. From the ethical standpoint of *karma*, moral life presupposes the freedom and eternity of the self.[1] The religious consciousness insists on the preservation of the eternal values of the freed self. When the gross body is dissolved in death, the *jīva* goes to heaven or hell, *svarga* or *naraka*, to enjoy the fruits of its good deeds or *puṇya* or to undergo suffering, as the consequence of its evil deeds or *pāpa*. No *jīva* can escape the consequences of its *karma*, and the law of retribution presupposes the immortality of the *jīva*, the existence of *Īs'vara* as the dispenser of justice, and the unity of the universe of space-time as the field of activity and the sphere of retribution. Deeds, good as well as bad, are never lost, and the *jīva* that has done *puṇya* ascends after death to *svarga* by the way of the *pitṛs* or the manes and enjoys the pleasures

[1] *S.B.*, III, ii. 9 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 605.

resulting from such *puṇya*. But the pleasures of *svarga* are as fleeting as earthly pleasures and are besides infected by the mental depression due to servility to gods. When its *puṇya* is exhausted by enjoyment, the *jīva* returns to the earth and reincarnates in a new body determined by its residual *karma* and begins a fresh career in the new environment.[1] The *jīva* having a record of wickedness is hurled into hell, suffers from pains proportionate to its evil deeds and is reborn in the world with a fresh opportunity to undo the past. The self has thus freedom to grow into *sātvic* goodness or lapse into *tāmasic* wickedness. It subjects itself to the adventure of numberless births and deaths, and is caught up in the see-saw of *saṃsāra*. While destiny drags the *jīva* down and subjects it to sorrow, the inner divinity in each *jīva* urges it to choose the way of blessedness, and it drifts between destiny and divinity till it decides on *mukti* and becomes a *Mumukṣu*.

The *ātman* and its *jñāna* were till now described from the standpoint of psychology as the subject of a separate *s'āstra*, but *Vēdāntic* psychology is really founded on its philosophy of religion and forms a half-way house in the passage from metaphysics to religion as expounded in the *Vēdānta Sūtras*. The nature of the *ātman* cannot be known apart from that of the *Paramātman* as the two are indissolubly related as *s'arīra* and *s'arīrin*, *aṃs'a* and *aṃs'in*.[2] This truth is explained at some length in my short work *Rāmānuja's Idea of the Finite Self* and may be briefly summarized in this context. The *jīva* or finite self is a *prakāra* of the *Paramātman* as a logical, ethical

[1] tasminyāvatsampātamuṣitvāthaitam ēvādhvānam punarnivartantē . . . tad ya iha ramaṇiyacaraṇā abhyās'o ha yattē ramaṇiyām yōnimāpadyēran . . , . atha ya iha kapūyacaraṇa abhyās'o ha yattē kapūyām yōnim-āpadyēran . . . . —*Ch. Up.*, V. x. 5 and 7.

[2] *S.B.*, II. iii, 42 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 559.

and aesthetic ego and is finally intuited as His *s'arīra*. Relations are not self-discrepant, but they do relate and the logical relation between the finite and the infinite self is brought out by the categories of cause and effect, substance and attribute and whole and parts. The *jīva* is the effect of Brahman in the sense that a term connoting Brahman in the effected or differentiated state is co-ordinated with another connoting the same in the causal or non-differentiated state. This view leads to the second concept of the *jīva* as the inseparable attribute or *apṛthaksiddhavis'ēṣaṇa* of *sat* which is the ultimate substance. The substance is the subject of qualities and there is connection of content between the supreme self and its quality, the *jīva*. The *vis'ēṣaṇa* is not only an eternal differentiation of the absolute but also an eternal part or *aṃs'a* of Brahman who is the *vibhu* or the whole of Reality; the *jīva* is a spark of the brilliant Self.[1] The *jīva* is not merely a mode of Brahman but is a spiritual monad, though not an atom in the quantitative sense. The idea that Brahman is one entity and that the *jīva* is separate is mathematical and not metaphysical, as the true infinite transcends the category of quantity. The *vibhu* is the *virāṭ* that is immanent in the *aṇu* or the monadic *jīva* as its inner Self, but it exceeds its finite content. Though monadic as a substance, the *jīva* has intelligence which is capable of becoming infinite. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* thus reconciles the discrepancy between monism and pluralism by its interpretation of the terms causality, substantiality and infinity. The *jīva* is the *upādēya*, *vis'ēṣaṇa* and *aṃs'a* and Brahman is the supreme Source, Super-Subject and the inner Self.

The ethical ego stresses the aspect of transcendence and external relation with *Īs'vara* in terms of *s'ēṣa* and

[1] *B.G.*, XV. 7.

s'ēṣi and *dāsa* and *s'vāmin*. While a quality is a quality of a substance, a relation is strictly between two substances. The *jīva* is not a *vis'ēṣaṇa*, but is a self-active personality or *vis'ēṣa* which is essentially free. *Īs'vara* is the *niyantā* and *Puruṣōttama*, who wills the true and the good and whose conation is immediately self-realized. He is absolutely pure, perfect and holy. The *jīva* attains self-sovereignty by subjugating sensibility and egoism or *ahaṅkara* and dedicating its freedom to the service of *Īs'vara*. The self realizes its utter dependence (*s'ēṣatva*) on *Īs'vara*, its inner Ruler, and its being a means to His satisfaction as the *s'ēṣa*. While *acit* also subserves the divine end of soul-making, *cit* is conscious of such instrumentality and is therefore called *dāsa*. Every deed is consecrated service to *Īs'vara*, as *kaiṅkarya* and the gift of self is the supreme *kaiṅkarya* to the Lord who is its real Self and Redeemer. The aesthetic ego reconciles immanence and transcendence by the concept of the *jīva* as not only the *jñātā* (knower), and the *kartā* (doer), but also as the *bhōktā* (enjoyer). While the logical view promotes intimacy and unity, the ethical way fosters reverence to the Holy. The aesthetic self combines the two by intuiting Brahman as *bhuvanasundara*, who creates for Himself a beautiful form of His own to attract the self and transmit beauty and bliss to it. The logical, ethical and aesthetic ego are ultimately transfigured into the three-fold expression of the *s'arīra* of Brahman in terms of *ādhēyatva*, *vidhēyatva* and *s'ēṣatva*. The term *s'arīrin* as applied to the *ātman* should satisfy the three conditions of modality, dependence and serviceability. Firstly as a mode it derives its being from Brahman as the very life of its life (*s'varūpa ās'ṛta*) and is sustained by its immanence (*ātmaika prakāratva*). Secondly it is controlled by its will (*saṅkalpās'rita*) and absolutely depends on it (*atmaikās'rayatva*). Finally the

self subsists as a means to the realization of the divine purpose (*ātmaika prayōjanatva*). Thus the *jīva* derives its substantiality from the Brahman as the *ādhāra*, depends on His redemptive will as the *niyantā* and exists as a means to the satisfaction of the *s'ēṣi*. Brahman as the source, sustenance and satisfaction of the finite self is called its *s'arīrin*. Every term connoting the *s'arīra* connotes the *s'ārīrin* and the *jīva* connotes also Brahman, its *s'arīrin*. There is a plurality of *jīvas* each having its own distinct character, although all *jīvas* are alike in so far as they have intelligence for their essential nature.[1]

The *Vīs'iṣṭādvaitic* view that the *jīva* or individual self is a *prakāra* of Brahman, the supreme Self who is its *prakārin*, is, on the face of it, paradoxical, because the *jīva* is also considered as a separate entity or centre of existence distinct from Brahman and having qualities of its own. It amounts to saying that the *jīva* is both a monad having an existence of its own and a mode or inseparable attribute of Brahman. Exception has been taken to this view of the relationship between the self and Brahman on the following grounds by objectors: (1) How can the same thing be both substance and attribute? (2) If the self is a mode or inseparable attribute of Brahman, how can it be at the same time a distinct centre of existence? If the self is a separate centre of experience, its relationship to Brahman would be external and this would be inconsistent with its being a mode of Brahman. (3) If a substance is different from the qualities by which only it is known, it is unknowable as a thing-in-itself. If, on the other hand, a substance is the same as its qualities, it cannot be called a monad as there would then be no substrate or

[1] *S.B.*, II. iii. 48, and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 565.

locus. (4) Again in perceptions like 'I see the rose' and more especially in self-consciousness, the self, which, according to the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* view, is a separate centre of consciousness, is both the experiencing subject and the experienced object. How can the conscious subject which is *cit* be also the object which is *acit* or *jaḍa*? (5) If the self and its consciousness be one, how can it be maintained that its *jñāna* is capable of becoming infinite when its own nature is atomic? It is difficult to conceive how the changeless can change. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitin* replies to these objections as follows: (1) That a thing can both be a substance and an attribute to another substance is not inconceivable. The lamp emits light; light is here an attribute of the lamp and at the same time it is in itself a substance. (2) The experienced object is not always *acit* or *jada*. When Dēvadatta perceives or infers the existence of his neighbour Sōmadatta, the latter, though experienced by the former, is himself a thinking or experiencing self. (3) It is only the relationship of the *s'arīra* and *s'arīrin* which *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* postulates between the self and Brahman, that can adequately bring out the intimacy that exists between the two, as in spiritual communion. This view has also the supreme merit of conveying the truth that the *Paramātman* as *s'arīrin* enters into the *jīvātman* which is Its *s'arīra* with a view to imparting substantiality and communicating Its infinite love to the *jīva*.

The other systems of philosophy, while trying to explain the relationship between Brahman and the self, fail to give satisfaction. The pluralist posits the existence of an infinite number of self-thinking and self-active entities persisting in their own right. This would make God a monad among many monads, or an each as a *puruṣa* among other *puruṣas*. It

reduces God to the position of a finite being. Some schools of theism define God as an extra-cosmic creator and insist on eternal distinctions between the creator and his creation. On this view God is too remote for the purpose of spiritual communion which is so essential to the religious consciousness. The *Bhēdābhēdavādins* contend that Brahman is both identical with the *jīva* and different from it. This would imply that Brahman is tainted with the imperfections of the self. The *Advaitin* concedes phenomenal reality to the finite self on the empirical plane, but maintains that it is only an illusory appearance shot through with self-contradiction and imposed on the absolute, which is sublatable ultimately by *jñāna*. He does not explain how Brahman came to be clouded by *avidyā*. Further, he is unable to define the nature of *mukti* and show why selves ridden by *avidyā* should continue to exist when *avidyā* has been destroyed by the *jñāna* of any one single self. Even a determined absolutist like Bradley admits that 'we do not know how or why the absolute divides itself into finite centres or the way in which, so divided, it remains as one.'

The existence of a plurality of selves is a fact of experience in all its levels though philosophy is unable to explain it. The mystic who has a soul-sight of God assures us that, in the state of communion, his separate consciousness is swallowed up and not his separate being and invites others to share his joy. The existence of a plurality of *jīvas* is proved by appeal to experience in all its aspects, perceptual, inferential and intuitive, and is generally affirmed by all schools of philosophy except by that of *Ēkajīva-vāda*. It holds the view that *esse* is *percipi* and that *dṛṣṭi* is *sṛṣṭi* and that there can be only one *sākṣin* or seer of all things and that whatever is known as *jaḍa* is false. The world of space-time-cause is only 'my' idea and is

created and sustained only by 'me' and by knowing the 'I' the 'me' including the whole known world disappears. The logic of *Ēkajīva-vāda* is irrefutable and inescapable and all attempts made by the *Advaitic* idealist to avoid subjectivism are futile and have proved a failure. The theories of *avidyā* and *māyā* and their relation only prove the thesis that non-dualism cannot free itself from the charge of the dualism between *māyā* and *avidyā*. If Brahman is conjoined with *māyā*, it either controls *māyā* or is controlled by it. In either case, it creates the *jīva* and causes the confusions and delusions of *avidyā*. To say that a false creation is only a play makes matters worse, when it makes Brahman a dreamer dreaming the world and enacting a false play to delight false persons. To avoid this God-destroying and world-negating logic, other *Advaitins* impute nescience only to the *jīva* and not to Brahman which is ever pure consciousness. Brahman is ever self-effulgent, but the *jīvas* are its myriad reflections due to the distortion of *avidyā*. The plurality of *avidyā* causes the plurality of *jīvas* and they are ever conjoined and mutually dependent and form a beginningless stream. This view does not improve the position as it makes the desire for freedom and freedom itself a make-believe. If *avidyā* is a stream, so is the *jīva*, and it is no entity. If *mukti* is the destruction of *avidyā* only, the nature of the *jīva* exists as distinct from Brahman, but if it is the destruction of the nature of the *jīva*, it is suicidal. The release of one *jīva* should at once result in that of all other *jīvas*. The whole difficulty arises out of assuming a false medium between Brahman and the *jīva*. The only logical way out of this impasse is to accept the view that Brahman is the locus of *avidyā* and is caught up in its self-contradiction. The limitation theory is more realistic than the reflection theory, as it gives some meaning to the need for, and the nature of *mukti*,

and marks a transition to the *Bhēdābhēda* view of real limiting adjuncts or *satyōpādhis* and not *mithyōpādhis*. But even this explanation is not free from the charge of importing a real defect in the nature of Brahman. Rāmānuja gives a new orientation to the whole problem by giving a moral meaning to *avidyā* in terms of *karma*, imputing *avidyā-karma* to the *jīva* and recognizing a plurality of *jīvas* and the need for moral and spiritual endeavour on the part of every *jīva* to attain Brahman.

CHAPTER XII

MUMUKṢUTVA

A PSYCHOLOGICAL insight into the imperfections of the *karma*-ridden *jīva* is essential to the practice of *vairāgya* or self-renouncement as a preparation for *Vēdāntic* life and the *Sūtrākāra* therefore devotes a special section called the *Vairāgya Pāda* to its study. The metaphysician that enquires into the nature of ultimate reality and truth becomes on the religious level a *mumukṣu* or spiritual seeker after Brahman. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion is founded on the fundamental *Vēdāntic* truth that the knower of Brahman attains the highest (*Brahmavid āpnōti paraṃ*). The enquiry into Brahman (*Brahmajijñāsā*) is governed by the supreme spiritual end of attaining immortality (*na ca punarāvartatē*). The knowledge of Brahman as the ground of existence obtained by employing the *pramāṇas* enables the self to determine the practical methods of attaining *mukti* or liberation from the hazards of birth and death. Ontology as a logical and dialectical account of reality has its completion only in teleology and value philosophy. Brahman as the ultimate *tattva* is spiritually realizable as the supreme *puruṣārtha* by moral and spiritual discipline which is known as the *hita*. The word *vēdanā* in the *Upaniṣad* connotes not merely the philosophic apprehension of Brahman but also the spiritual attempt at realization in

which *jñāna* deepens into *upāsanā* or meditation on Brahman. The attainment of God is the supreme and complete good which includes the moral and spiritual effort to realize it. Brahman is eternally self-realized and perfect, but the *jīva* in its empirical state forgets its divine destiny, like the prince who, forgetting his royal descent, lives as a hunter with other hunters in the woods and is providentially restored to his father's kingdom. The finite self has its source and sustenance in Brahman, but it forgets its divineness, wanders in the wilderness of *saṃsāra*, and finally regains the paradise of *Paramapada*. *Brahmajñāna* is not merely disillusionment but a spiritual ascent of the enlightened self to its home in the absolute. The supreme end of the *mumukṣu* is thus the realization of Brahman which is the consummation of moral discipline. Moral discipline is the process of self-purification elaborated in *Karma Yōga*, and spiritual culture is the method of self-realization prescribed in *Jñāna Yōga*. *Bhakti Yōga* is the scheme of God-realization as the completion of the moral and spiritual disciplines. In this way the three *Yōgas* are the triple ways of *Vēdāntic* culture leading to the knowledge of Brahman.

The *ātman* is essentially free and eternal, and lives, moves and has its being in the *Paramātman* as its inner Self. But somehow it falsely identifies itself with *prakṛti*, and the *ātman* which is a mode of Brahman imagines itself to be the mode of matter. Like attracts like and the *prakṛti*-ridden *puruṣa* acts as if it were a bodily self drawn by the objects of sense and thus becomes the slave of sensibility. The *ātman* as the self-conscious subject that is eternally free and blissful has Brahman as its source, centre and sustenance. But owing to the influence of *avidyā-karma* whose origin cannot

be temporally or logically explained, the *ātman* forgets its home in the absolute, is enticed by *prakṛti* and is caught up in the cycle of birth and death and pleasure and pain. *Avidyā* creates the confusion of *dēhātma-bhrama* or *abhimāna*, due to the failure to distinguish between the self and the body. *Abhimāna* generates *kāma* or the lusts of the flesh. *Kāma* lapses into hatred if the desire for the objects of sense is frustrated. The effect of *avidyā-karma* is conserved in the mind-body as the infinite causal chain of *karma* containing the possibility of future births and deaths. The *jīva* by forgetting its divine heritage, enters into the body of every kind of living being,—human, sub-human and celestial,—is tossed up and down in the scales of evolution from the amoeba to the archangel and subjects itself to the infinite hazards and hardships of metempsychosis. Even the hedonistic satisfaction of *svarga* gained by the practice of *yajña* (sacrifice), *dāna* (gifts) and *tapas* (penance) is trivial and transient (*alpa*, *asthira*). The *jīva* ascends to *svarga* by its meritorious *karma* but is used by the *dēvas* not as a free self but as a thing, and, as a means to the gratification of their celestial desires.[1] It is like a beast for the *dēvas*.[2] The will of the gods to rule others is made possible because of the will to serve them that is present in the *puṇya*-ridden *jīva* loaded with *karma*. Corresponding to the pleasures of *svarga* are the pains of *naraka* or hell and both follow the law of retribution with mathematical precision.[3] The monistic view that heaven and hell are mere mental experiences without a place in the objective universe is a form of subjective idealism which ignores the reality of the world of space-time and social

[1] S. *B.*, III. i. 7 and *S. B. E.*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 589.
[2] tam dēvāḥ bakṣayanti yathā pas'ur ēvam sa dēvānām.—*Bṛ. Up.*, I. iv. 10.
[3] S. *B.*, III. i. 9 and *S. B. E.*, Vol. XLVIII. p. 591.

order and explains away the facts of cosmic life as figurative expressions. But the *Vēdāntin* accepts the reality of the cosmic order and the solidarity of society in all its levels in the three-storeyed universe of the sub-human, human and celestial orders.

Self-renouncement or *virakti* is the first requisite of the *mumukṣu* who seeks the infinite bliss of Brahman, and it is freedom from the desires of terrestrial and celestial pleasures. The sensualist regards the world as a carnal feast and revels in the joys of earthly paradise, without looking before and after. The sense-bound *Lōkāyata* or materialistic hedonist sings the glory of sensual life, luxuriates in ease and voluptuousness and rolls in the soft cushions of sense-born joys designed by Eros. Nothing is more pleasing than pleasure and the story of Prince Siddhārtha sums up poetically the joys of a hedonistic heaven in a pleasure-palace with its softened light, sweet odours, delicious foods, with juicy fruits and soothing amorous songs, with dreamy dances and delicate ministers of love. To the seeker after the pleasures of *svarga*, the joys of *dēvalōka*, the world of the gods, with the shining wealth of Kubēra, soft Gandharva melodies and revels in the company of Rambhā and others exceed in range and variety human pleasures as they are satisfactions without any strife or satiety. Life is, on the whole, rich and rosy and its pleasure ranges in intensity and extent from the pleasure of the pig to the happiness of Brahmā. The body is not a tomb of the soul but is a poem of beauty and the senses express the joy of the union of *puruṣa* with *prakṛti*. It is a bond and not a bondage. The lights of heaven gladden the hearts of all beings. Everything in the universe, 'high and low, great and small, tile and tower, bush and brake' is born

of this joy. Even the holy ascetic that is rapt in *yōga* in his Himālayan retreat and suppresses his cravings, cannot resist the seductive charms of *kāma*. Even the *dēvas* that reign in their heavenly worlds are ruled by Eros and carnal desires. The seeker after pleasure therefore summons all rational beings to employ their reason in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures as the sole end of life. If it is said that pleasure is mixed with pain, it is prudence to avoid the pain and relish the pleasure, and not to renounce the latter. The *Vēdas* that deny the value of sense-pleasures are self-contradictory and false and are the reasonings and rhapsodies of fools. Therefore, concludes the *Cārvāka*, the self is the body and every one should eat, drink and be merry and feed on pleasures by fair means or foul. The philosophy of the *Cārvāka* is thus an appeal to commonsense and sensibility and though it may seem repugnant to reason is yet ineradicable, as its foundations are deeply laid in human nature and animal faith.

Pleasures are indeed pleasant but they are tinged with pain and lead to pain. Therefore hedonistic optimism inevitably leads to the pessimistic feeling that life is rooted in suffering.[1] The pessimist thinks that optimism is shallow and is founded on ignorance and that the superficial man alone possesses the happy-go-lucky frame of mind. The world is a vale of woe and it is false to say that nature is benign, as it is red in tooth and claw. Life lives on death and leads to death and there is a chain of destruction everywhere. Life is based on strife and cut-throat competition. The spectre of death stalks at the very centre of being and is the

[1] *Vide* the chapter on "Sickmindedness" in James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*.

retribution of the will to live. Every pleasure is fraught with pain and the pursuit of happiness as the end and aim of life is a mere will-o'-the-wisp. The socalled agreeable feeling is, to the pessimist, neither a present experience nor life one of anticipation or recollection. The present is ever-fleeting and momentary pleasure is self-stultified. The aching thirst for life is a living contradiction. The world is irrational and "full of sound and fury." It is a monstrous error and is the worst of all possible worlds, and sorrow is inherent in the very nature of things and in the human will. Everything in life is passing away without any stability or substantiality; youth and manhood fade away, beauty perishes like the perfume of a minute, wealth vanishes, and power and reputation are shadows and not substantial things. Even the joy of falling in love is followed by the dejection of falling out of love. Behind the glories of life, there lurks a curdling gloom. Life is not merely evanescent; it has also no inner value, and reflection on its inner meaning constrains one to draw the conclusion that it is a tragic waste fraught with sadness and the agony of despair. Wickedness is the lawless law of life and goodness is only a show; vice gushes out of every pore of our being in torrential profusion. History is a record of the gradual decline of civilization and the extinction of life. The poet who at first enjoys the comedy of life with its carnival of pleasures is driven by the logic of facts to the tragic conclusion that virtue and wisdom are only a delusion and have no abiding value. In the conflict between good and evil, evil overpowers good, and in the final catastrophe, both perish; the triumph of virtue over vice is only an ethical dream. The logician who seeks truth is confronted by the self-contradictions of intellectual life and is shipwrecked at the very entrance to the harbour. The artist delights in fancy and fiction, but devotion to art is only

an escape from life, akin to opium-eating followed by life-killing depression. The philosopher who knocks at the gates of knowledge is oppressed by the riddles of the Sphynx and finds no answer to them. Even the philanthropist that delights in humanitarian service is troubled by the thought that the individual withers in social uplift and that the perfection of society is itself futile like the attempt to straighten a dog's curly tail. This desperate discontentment with life and its values begets a mood of sceptical cynicism and the pessimist in his desperation is tortured by the dilemma 'whether it is nobler to endure the failure of life or take up arms against a sea of troubles' and end life at one stroke.

Vēdānta does not accept or justify the thoroughgoing pessimism outlined above, as it is opposed to the view that death is complete extinction and that the self is only a perishing series. Ontologically speaking, the *ātman* is eternal and the changes of birth and death apply only to the phenomenal or the bodily self. When *puruṣa*, the self, falsely identifies himself with *prakṛti* and its *guṇas*, he subjects himself to the confusions of *avidyā* and the contractions of *karma* and suffers from the infinite hazards and hardships of metempsychosis. Life is neither entirely good nor entirely evil. It is neither wholly pleasant nor wholly painful, but is conditioned by their relativity and is of dual character. The moral experiences of *puṇya* and *pāpa* are ultimately traceable to the responsibility of the empirical self and are in no way attributable to fatalism or supernaturalism. *Puṇya* and *pāpa* are not determined by reflective thought but are due to *Vēdic* imperatives and *dharma* is what ought to be desired and done and *adharma* is what is prohibited. Every man reaps what he sows and evil is expiated by suffering, though every case of

suffering, like that experienced in motherly love, is not due to evil. Good and evil are relative as they are linked by causal necessity and both are chains that fetter the soul, though the former is golden and the latter is of iron. Even in *svarga*, the *puṇya*-ridden *puruṣa* is like a beast of burden to the *dēvas*, a thing ministering to their satisfaction, and when a man's *puṇya* is exhausted, he is hurled down to the fetters of foetus-life. The happy *jīvas* of *Brahmalōka* are also subject to the causal necessity of *karma* arising from past volitional acts and will be born again in this world. Every *jīva* has the freedom to grow into godliness or lapse into *āsuric* or demoniac life, but no one—not even a god—can escape the law of retribution, when once the deed is done. He has free will, but suffers from his wilfulness. All *jīvas*, from the butterfly to Brahmā, are alike conditioned by the law of *karma* and are subject to the cycle of births and deaths. Life is not a chapter of accidents, but has its foundation in the moral order. The noumenal self as *puruṣa* is free, but somehow and somewhen it gets phenomenalized, becomes bound to *prakṛti* and is caught up in the causal necessity of *karma*. *Puruṣa* is imprisoned in the body made of *prakṛti* and suffers from the succession of birth and death, pleasure and pain, till he regains his lost freedom. He is now in chains owing to himself; but he can be free.

The orgin of *avidyā-karma* cannot be logically or temporally accounted for, as the ideas of logical and temporal priority belong to the phenomenal realm and have no transcendental value. But in the infinity of the temporal process of *sṛṣṭi* and *pralaya*, the *avidyā*-ridden self has somehow followed its downward career of wickedness and sin, though this is not due to any inner depravity or original sin. The

removal of evil is more important to the *mumukṣu* than a logical account of its orgin. Owing to the fall from spirituality, the evil wayward will of the *jīva* gathers momentum and the self has to pay the penalty by increased suffering. *Karma* causes rebirth and rebirth adds to the propensity to evil, and this vicious circle throws us into the maelstrom of misery. Suffering was already described as three-fold, namely *ādhidaivika*, *ādhibhautika* and *ādhyātmika*. The first is due to supernatural causes like the influence of the *dēvas* or gods; the second is also externally originated, but is due not to the gods but to animate and inanimate beings like the devastations caused by earthquakes and the third is subjective as it has a psycho-physical or central orgin. Pain is sensational, supernatural or emotional; but in all cases misery follows from the law of retribution. Evil and suffering result from the abuse of freedom and cannot be explained in terms of fatalism and supernaturalism. True pessimism is not founded on morbidity or melancholia but is the result of philosophic or *Vēdāntic* reflection. Desire and aversion (*kāma* and *krōdha*) are the twin laws of the life of sensibility and they are the root cause of all evil and suffering.[1] *Kāma* is generated by the contact of the *puruṣa* with the objects of sense. Man hopes to be, but never is blest and the frustration of desire results in the feeling of disappointment and defeatism which brings on a mood of dejection and anger. *Kāma-krōdha* causes mental and moral confusion and self-deception and the dispersal of personality. Confusion feeds confusion and ends at last in the catastrophe of moral and spiritual death.[2] The primary cause of suffering is therefore traceable to the desire for the objects of sense. While the moth, the deer, the elephant, the fish and the bee are

[1] *B.G.*, III, 37.
[2] *B.G.*, II 62, 63.

drawn to death in the act of gratifying a single sense organ, man is allured by the cumulative charm and solicitation of the five senses and suffers physical and moral death. From the cradle to the cremation ground life is a will-o-'the-wisp. The mind is ever haunted by fear and the sense of insecurity, even in the celestial planes; the rosy romance of youth fades away and gives place to the gloom of old age and death. This mood of sickmindedness induced on the empirical self by its adventures in the unstable world of *saṃsāra* is brought out in the story of the weary traveller in the desert who, chased by a wild beast, jumps into a dry well and clings to some root, half way down, while a dragon is ready below to devour him, and yet he delights in licking off drops of honey where he clings. The *jīva* tortured by the ills of *saṃsāra* hangs on to the boughs of life, faces the gnawing of time and the dragon of death and yet he eagerly sucks the drops of pleasure like a frog that fondly seizes flies while it is itself being slowly devoured by a snake.

This sickmindedness is a temporary stage of reflective life and not a real resting place. The transition from the superficial and self-satisfied optimism of the *Lōkāyata* or voluptuary to the pessimism of the philosopher marks the rise and development of *vairāgya* through different stages. In the first stage, the worldly man pursues the pleasures of the senses and becomes a slave of passion, receives blows from nature and turns into a sceptic and cynic, but this change arrests the philosophical and moral development of the individual and is spiritually untenable as its effect is not far different from the morbidity and melancholia of the psychopathic temperament. In the second stage, when the feeling of disappointment assumes a religious colouring, it becomes a species of pseudo-*sanyāsa* of the sour-grape variety. When disappointments

increase, they deepen into disgust and life loses its zest and value and the feeling of world-weariness creeps on the soul and the mood of healthy-mindedness is changed into that of sickmindedness. While the optimist makes the most of life by regarding even pains as blessings in disguise, the sickminded philosopher thinks that life is a tale of woe and that the world is a Vanity Fair. He dreads every pleasure as a feeling fraught with pain. In a still higher stage of self-renunciation, pleasure and pain cancel each other and the *mumukṣu* cultivates the attitude of *Sāṅkhyan* or Stoic detachment. The *dvandvas* or pairs of opposites like success and failure, pleasure and pain, have no attraction for him, as he, in a mood of masterly inactivity, no longer identifies himself with the contending passions, but remains aloof as a spectator practising *samatva* (equanimity of mind). Even this state may lapse into a state of indifference or neutral point and life may become a contentless void without any positive value. *Mumukṣutva*, as a desire for freedom from the world of *saṃsāra*, is a negative state ; but freedom is not only freedom *from* a life of evil and misery but freedom *towards* another state, as every negation has a positive meaning and the exclusion of one alternative implies the affirmation of another. The idea of self-renouncement as a spiritual ideal implies the abandonment of the lower self of sensibility in favour of the higher self in the *kaivalya* state or the aloneness of the *ātman*. *Ahaṅkāra* or the will to live a selfish life should stultify itself and thus affirm the true *ahaṃ* or self. Even the end as self-realization is only a half-way house, as it is ego-centric and not theo-centric ; it is on the road to real freedom but is not the end itself. In the highest state of *mumukṣutva*, self-renouncement acquires its full positive meaning, and, by abandoning the carnal self of *prakṛti* and the spiritual

self-centredness of *kaivalya* the *mumukṣu* regards God as the centre and source of his life and becomes a *bhakta* or devotee. Renunciation of *ahaṅkāra* and the realization of the self go together, and by renouncing the lower self the highest Self is realized. The failure of life on the phenomenal plane is inevitable and the mood of sickmindedness brought on by such failure is justifiable. *Virakti* is essential to spiritual life, as it destroys the sensualism and the self-complacency of the *Lōkāyata* who is satisfied with the world as it is and it transcends the negations of Buddhistic pessimism and the indifferentism of the Stoic. The *mumukṣu* with his genius for the absolute at first seeks the false infinite in the senses, but later realizes that the joy of sensibility is fragmentary and fleeting and then seeks the true infinite that is beyond the senses. *Viṣaya rāga* or the desire for the pleasures of sense is *alpa* (insignificant) and *asthira* (evanescent) ; but *Bhagavad rāga* or love of God leads to infinite and eternal bliss.

The ontology of *Vēdānta* has no meaning apart from its teleology and the philosophy of values. Brahman is not merely the ultimate subject of rationalistic metaphysics, but is also the highest reality present in volitional and emotional consciousness. It is the ground of existence as well as the supreme good of life or *puruṣārtha*. The good is that at which all rational beings aim as the supreme value or *summum bonum*, and it is fourfold, *viz.*, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mōkṣa*. Economic goods like *artha* have only instrumental or market value and are a means to an end and not the end itself and not all the wealth of a Croesus or Kubēra can give lasting satisfaction. The pursuit and possession of political power is equally futile on account of the instability inherent in it and the jealousy which it excites in the have-nots. This truth is

forcibly expressed by the instance of Carlyle's shoeblack whose greed increases with satisfaction. Even when half the universe is offered to him, he grumbles and declares himself 'the most maltreated of men.' Moral good or *dharma* has no doubt an intrinsic value, as the only thing that is good without qualification is the performance of duty for its own sake. Moral effort is itself worth while and there is no substitute for it in this world or beyond it. But what is right or *dharma* cannot be separated from the goodness of the end, and moral good has no value apart from the supreme good as *summum bonum*. The end as pleasure is the agreeable feeling that arises when the object of desire is attained and is the sense of value, but it has neither definiteness nor duration. Hedonism in the psychological, ethical, or spiritual aspect cannot serve as a final theory in the philosophy of values. The first is meaningless, because, if every one seeks happiness as a psychological fact, it is absurd to say he ought to seek it as a *puruṣārtha*. The second is incomplete as it does not fully bring out the content of the ideal of happiness in the quantitative and qualitative aspects. There are degrees of pleasure as well as kinds of pleasure and there is no definite criterion or standard of preference. Besides, it is not the feeling of pleasure alone that a man seeks but also the object that yields satisfaction. If pleasure is the feeling of self-realizedness, it is not clear whether it is the animal, rational or spiritual self that is realized. The pleasure that arises when the *puruṣa* is gratified with the objects of sense varies and vanishes; the happiness of realizing the *puruṣa* as distinct from *prakṛti* is more enduring, but has no altruistic or religious motive. The bliss of knowing the inner Self or Brahman alone has abiding value; but this doctrine abandons the hedonistic view of *kāma* as the end of life and accepts a non-hedonistic criterion. The highest

end of life is thus neither the acquisition of wealth and power, nor the performance of moral duty or *dharma* nor the satisfaction of desires, but the realization of Brahman which is the highest good, the supreme duty and the infinite bliss.

If virtue and knowledge go together, bliss also is inseparable from them and therefore *Brahmajñāna*, *Brahmaprayatna* and *Brahmānanda* cannot be really separated though they may be logically analysed as the cognitional, conational and affective elements of the same spiritual experience. The *mumukṣu* who enquires into the nature of Brahman as the supreme *sat* or Reality also desires to realize Brahman as the highest end of moral and aesthetic life. What is apprehended as the most valid truth is also attained as the most valuable end or good. Knowledge and value are thus mediate and immediate and the pursuit of truth as of pleasure is a progressive and immediate attainment. While the progressionist prefers pursuit to possession, the perfectionist as absolutist prefers possession or the state of eternal self-realizedness to pursuit. But the *Viśiṣṭādvaitin* recognizes the value of spiritual progress and the philosophical truth of the self-realized nature of Brahman. The *mumukṣu* equipped with *jñāna* and *vairāgya* seeks Brahman because he knows that Brahman is his Self. The moral and spiritual good which a man chooses and strives for presupposes the complete good of which the moral choice and the spiritual endeavour are integral aspects. The main steps in the path to perfection consist in the moral discipline or self-purification brought about by the performance of duty or *Karma Yōga*, the spiritual illumination of *Jñāna Yōga* and the loving meditation on Brahman or *Bhakti Yōga*.

The *Upaniṣadic* conception of the *mumukṣu* transcends in its lofty sublimity the nature of the mere philosopher who speculates on the nature of reality without the requisite *sādhanas* or means. Before setting out in some detail the nature of the *yōgas* or steps to realization, the essential character of the *mumukṣu* as a seeker after immortal bliss as indicated in the *Upaniṣads* may be considered. When Yama, the god of death, offers to young Nacikētas boons, earthly and celestial, which cannot be easily attained by mortals, Nacikētas declines all of them on the ground that they are evanescent, chooses the good by rejecting the pleasant and thus follows the way of wisdom and eternal life.[1] Nārada says to Sanatkumāra that he knows every science, art and philosophy but is still stricken with sorrow [2] and learns that the weary search to find eternal bliss is not in secular and *Vēdic* knowledge but in the *Vēdāntic* wisdom of Brahman. There is no bliss in anything finite, but it is in the infinite alone. Brahman alone is free from evil, sin and suffering. Indra likewise comes to know that, if he realizes Brahman by freeing himself from his bodily self, he would obtain all the worlds and attain all desires in the world of Brahman.[3] In the immortal words of the *Vēda* or the *Upaniṣad*, on the same tree there are two inseparable birds and while one of them eats the sweet and bitter fruits, the other with brilliant plumage shines in all serenity. The finite self should shake off good and evil and soar heavenward till it becomes one with its eternal Other and shed its sorrows of *saṃsāra*.[4] Maitreyī tells her husband Yajñāvalkya that the

[1] *Kaṭh. Up.*, I. i. 26 to 29.

[2] sōham bhagavō mantravid ēvāsminātmavit . . . tarati s'ōkām ātmavid iti sōham bhagavān s'ōcāmi.—*Ch. Up.*, VII. i. 3.

[3] sa sarvāṃs'ca lōkān āpnōti sarvāṃs'ca kāmān yastam ātmānam anuvidya vijānāti.—*Ch. Up.*, VIII. vii. 1.

[4] dva suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṃ vṛkṣaṃ pariṣasvajāte | tayōr anyaḥ pippalaṃ svādvatti anas'nan anyo abhicākās'iti.—*Muṇḍ. Up.*, III. i. 1.

possession of the whole earth would not satisfy her and seeks the way of eternal life.[1] *Brahmajñāna* is not for the materialistic optimist that seeks the lusts of the flesh nor to the pessimistic philosopher to whom life is not worth living, but for the *Vēdāntic mumukṣu* who seeks to return to Brahman, his real self, and thus regain the eternal values of divine life.

[1] sā hōvāca Maitrēyī yannu mē iyam bhagōḥ sarvā pṛthivī vittēna pūrṇā syāt katham tēnāmṛtā syāmiti nēti hōvāca Yājñavalkyaḥ . . . 1 sā hōvāca Maitrēyī yēnāham nāmṛtā syām kimaham tēna kuryām.—*Bṛ. Up.*, IV. iv. 2 and 3.

CHAPTER XIII

KARMA YŌGA

KARMA is different from *Karma Yōga*, as the former furnishes the datum of the moral life, and the latter its discipline, The study of *karma* is the subject-matter of the psychology of the moral self, while *Karma Yōga* deals with the moral determination of the ideal involved in conduct. Conciousness is essentially conative, whether it is sensory-motor or idea-motor, and *karma* refers to the conative tendency of consciousness in all its levels, Even introspection is an activity. Cessation from *karma* in thought, word or deed is a psychological impossibility.[1] *Karma* as voluntary action is purposive, and involves the idea of end, which is called *kāma* or desire. *Kāma* is either externally originated (*spars'aja*) or centrally initiated (*saṅkalpaja*); but in either case, it is the desire for the objects of sense. Owing to the conservation of moral values, the effect of every *karma* leaves its impress in the psycho-neural mechanism or mind-body, and it is then known as an instinct, disposition or *vāsanā*. This mind-body, which contains the *karma*-complex, acts on the empirical self, and is acted on by it, and the millions of nerves embedded in the human nervous system is evidence of the infinite chain of the causality

[1] *B. G.*, III.5.

of *karma*. The story of the evolution of *karma* has no beginning, in the sense that it cannot be logically or temporally explained, and *karma* may therefore be described as a matter of moral faith, as the result of *anādi-avidyā* (beginningless ignorance). The *jīva* is therefore impelled by its ancient propensity of *avidyā-karma* to seek the pleasures of sensibility, and it follows the previously shaped pathways of error and evil and the career of transmigration or *saṃsāra*. Owing to its proneness to evil, which is self-created, and not innate or inherited, the self desires the objects of sense; but the infinite, which alone can give true satisfaction, is not in the senses but beyond them, and no finite object gives true satisfaction. When the desire is frustrated, it generates anger, anger clouds the intellect and confounds the natural light of reasoning. Confusion destroys practical reason and leads to moral decay.[1] The empirical self is imprisoned in the see-saw of *advidyā-karma*, and subjects itself to the hazards of metempsychosis, and when it is overpowered by *tamas*, it almost becomes a bare monad or mode of matter without any moral consciousness. But the infinite within the *jīva* urges it to emerge into higher stages and ascend to the human level. While animals act unconsciously towards an end not realized morally, man alone is conscious of the end, as he has practical reason as well as feeling. Every voluntary action involves the idea of an end and presupposes the distinction between the doer, the deed and the satisfaction that results from the realization of the end. When the sensualist desires an object, it is a felt want, and the object of desire is said to be a thing that would satisfy that want. The self

[1] saṅgāt sañjāyatē kāmaḥ kāmāt krōdhōbhijāyatē ||
krōdhād bhavati sammōhaḥ sammōhāt smṛtivibhramaḥ |
smṛtibhraṃs'ād buddhinās'ō buddhi nās'āt praṇas'yati ||.
—*B. G.*, II, 62 and 62.

desires pleasure in the object, and this pleasure is different from the object of pleasure. The natural self, as the mode of *prakṛti*, is influenced by its three *guṇas* of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and a knowledge of the *guṇas* is therefore essential in ascending from the psychology of what is given in conduct to the ethics of what ought to be. The *tāmasic* mind is steeped in ignorance, slothfulness [1] and hesitancy. It does not resist evil, but lazily acquiesces in it. It lacks decision of character and drifts mechanically in a stupid and stubborn way. The *rājasic* mind is roving and restless, and delights in the pleasures of self-domination and self-glorification. The restless *rāgī* is compared to a maddened monkey stung by a scorpion and possessed by an evil spirit, and life to him is a "fitful fever full of sound and fury." The *rāgī* is swayed by the love of power and possession, and he exerts his will to power by enslaving others and seeking world-dominion. When the self is dominated by *sattva*, it transcends the *tāmasic* state of animal existence and the *rājasic* life of adventure, and develops moral consciousness. The *sāttvic* person has clear and distinct ideas, and knows the distinction between the life of passion and the life of reason, and, since knowledge and virtue go together, he practises virtue on account of its intrinsic value. The psychology of the three *guṇas* [2] throws light on the moral character of the doer, the deed and the self-satisfaction resulting from the realization of the end. The *sāttvic* agent is an *anahaṃvādi*, who sheds his egoism and self-love by means of his sanity and sobriety. His deed is emptied of *kāma*, and his feeling is not quite pleasant to start with, but is happiness in the end. When the animal self is thus moralized, it rises from the *tāmasic* level of inertia to the *rājasīc* state of restless adventure, and at last evolves into *sāttvic* serenity.

[1] *B. G.*, XIV. 8. [2] *B. G.*, XVIII.

The ethics of *Karma Yōga* may be developed by a criticism of the extreme theories of hedonism and rationalism in the west and the east. The hedonist seeks the satisfaction of sensibility and aims at pleasure for the sake of pleasure as the only end and aim of human conduct. The extreme hedonist or *Cārvāka* distrusts reason, refuses to look before or after, and tries to secure the pleasure of the moment; but his theory stultifies itself, as rationality is the essential quality of man. The more moderate hedonist therefore utilizes reason as the ally of passion, and thinks of happiness as the end and aim of life as a whole. The altruist pursues the logic of hedonism still further, and defines the end of conduct as the attainment of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The *Vēdavādin*,[1] who seeks *Vēdic* sanction for his conduct, does not accept the sensuous and rational origin of pleasure, but relies on the *Vēdic* imperatives and their hedonistic value here and in *svarga*. But all the hedonistic theories are shipwrecked on the distinction between pleasure and the objects of pleasure and on their differences in quality and quantity. Pleasure is not only freedom from pain, but is also positive enjoyment, and it is never attained in the world of the objects of sense. Even the joys of *svarga* or extra-mundane delights are only sensual or *kāma-rūpa* and have only transient and not lasting value. Hedonistic ritualism is formal and extrinsic, and has no intrinisic worth. Buddhistic and *Sāṅkhyan* ethics go to the opposite extreme, and uphold the rationalistic view that passion should be subdued by reason. The Buddhistic formula of the eightfold noble path insists on the destruction of the will to live and the doer-consciousness, and favours exit from life as the end of conduct. The *Sāṅkhyan* view is more concrete, as it affirms the immutability of the *puruṣa* and the mutability

[1] *B G.*, II. 42.

of *prakṛti,* and defines the moral end as the practice of the detachment of the *puruṣa* from the allurements of *prakṛti.* But this view is also untenable, as the *Sāṅkhyan* spectator sees nothing and does nothing. The Stoic and Kantian theory of morals also recognizes the dignity of reason, but it is also a negative account, as reason without emotional content is empty and formal. Feeling without reason is blind, and reason without feeling is empty, and the *Vēdāntic* view of *Karma Yōga* avoids these pitfalls, and follows the golden mean.

The meaning of *Karma Yōga* is further developed by a refutation of the activistic and ascetic view of morals. The activist, like the virile westerner, engages himself in incessant work for promoting his own welfare or for altruistic service or for a co-operative adventure with the finite god, who has the will to fight evil, and wins in the end. The man of action, with his will to work and win, hates the motto of the fatalist, who resigns himself to the inevitable, and endures the burden of life with indifferent acquiescence. With restless *rājasic* feeling and explosive energy, he plunges into work with a view to curing the ills of life and conquering his environment. The man with a precipitate will or mercurial temperament often goes forward with reckless energy and without due deliberation. As William James says in his *Psychology*, the pent-up passion suddenly breaks through the dam and discharges itself in catastrophic activity without any controlling power. A higher type of volition presupposes forethought before the final decision is taken, and it implies the feeling of effort and the fiat of the will by which we thrive and strive for ever. There is more joy in the pursuit of an ideal than in its possession. The world-shatterers and reformers belong to this activistic type. But incessant work without rest or reflection is morally

undesirable, as it stresses overt action at the expense of inner purity and peace. The ascetic attitude offers a striking contrast to the *rājasic* condition of mind, as it inhibits the free flow of motor-energy and blocks it up. It begins with self-mortification or suppression of the flesh in the physiological sense, and may end in moral inanity, in which introspection may never reach the level of effectiveness. The habit of inhibiting the external senses and motor-energy and cherishing morbid feelings and calling it virtue is rightly condemned as cold-blooded hypocrisy.[1] In the higher stages, the ascetic becomes a contemplative, who is interested in subduing his animal propensities and vanquishing all *vāsanās* or dispositions. But this introspective habit of arresting thought atrophies thought and the very springs of life. Introspection paralyses effort and leads to moral impotence. The highest stage of introversion consists in absolute self-renouncement and conversion to the stage of *sanyāsa* by withdrawal from the world. *Sanyāsa* may be fascinating and beneficial to the reflective philosopher at certain stages of his life, but it is only a means to an end and not the end itself. Besides, it cannot be universalized. The ethics of *Karma Yōga* strikes a middle path between activism in excess and asceticism in excess, as it favours renunciation in action as opposed to renunciation of action as the ideal of conduct.

The ethics of *niṣkāma karma* or action without the desire for the fruit thereof may now be expounded in the light of the *Gītā* metaphysics of morals, which, for profundity and practical value, stands unmatched in the history of ethics in the east and in the west. While every living being does its *karma* according to a purpose, man alone has the conception of *karma*

[1] *B. G.*, III. 6.

owing to his practical reason or moral consciousness, including reason and will. In a moral situation arising from a conflict of desires, he can exercise his discrimination by weighing its pros and cons and arrive at a decision. By his *buddhi* he can distinguish between the *kṣētrajña* or *dēhi* (the embodied self) and the *kṣētra* or *dēha* and know that as the *ātman*, he is *apariṇāma* or free from the mutations of matter or *prakṛti*, *pramātā* or the subject that is conscious of himself and the world of nature different from the *ātman*, and *avinās'i* or the immortal self distinct from the pseudo-self of *prakṛti*, which is subject to a series of births and deaths. *Buddhi* develops into *vyavasāyātmikā buddhi* or the disciplined thought of the *mumukṣu*, which frees *karma* from the distractions of *viṣaya kāma* or sensual desire and the perils of moral particularism, and fosters the one-pointed aim of *mōkṣa kāma* or desire for release. The sensitive self is withdrawn from the seductions of sensibility and given a moral direction and fixity by the idea of *niṣkāma karma* or the performance of *karma* without *kāma* or *viṣaya rāga*. *Niṣkāma karma* as a negative concept has a twofold meaning, as it excludes the subjective influence of animal inclinations of *rāga* and *dvēṣa* and the objective ends of utility or *lābha* and *alābha* (gain and loss). *Karma Yōga* does not rest on the desire for pleasure or personal likes and dislikes, which are the ruling motives of our empirical conduct; nor is it conditioned by any external end as economic gain or political power. *Niṣkāma karma* is thus the performance of action without being impelled by the hedonistic ends of pursuing *sukha* (pleasure) and avoiding *duḥkha* (pain) or the pairs of opposites or the utilitarian ends of securing success or *lābha* and avoiding failure or *alābha*. Even the good deeds performed to please the gods and win favours from them are commercial transactions that impair the dignity

and intrinsic worth of moral life. *Niṣkāma karma* is thus good in itself without qualification, and has its own intrinsic value. It is duty for the sake of duty irrespective of consequences.[1] Such duty as a negative view of morals may be different from a positive account, but it is not bare negation. None in this world is free from *karma* and even the state of *naiṣkarmya* or philosophic inaction is influenced by the interplay of the three *guṇas* of *prakṛti*. The *jñāni* himself has to maintain his body by activity. The whole cosmic order is also a moral order, and is sustained by the law of *karma*. The *dēvas* have to do their duty in the interests of world welfare. Even *Īsvara*, the supreme Lord, who is not bound by *karma*, is ever active as the moral ruler of the universe.[2] The law of *karma* thus rules the cosmic order, whether its causality is conditioned or free, and the *jīva*, which is imprisoned by the chain of *avidyā-karma* owing to its age-long identification with *prakṛti*, can never escape from the wheel of *karma* as long as it is in the world of *saṃsāra*. The empirical or earth-bound self as the doer doing the deed is therefore externally determined by the *guṇas* of *prakṛti*, and whether its mind is clear, calm and happy or confused, restless and unhappy or ignorant, indolent and inert, it is never free from the domination of the *guṇas*, which have become its habit or second nature. *Akarma* or inaction is thus a psychological impossibility ; but, ethically, it is possible for the self to dissociate itself from *guṇa*-ridden *karma*, as it is essentially the *ātman* and not the bodily self moulded on the pattern of *prakṛti*. The moral philosopher, who knows the psychology of the empirical ' me ' or *ahaṅkāra* as the result of the conjunction of the *ātman* with *prakṛti*, concludes that *karma*[3] is due

[1] *B. G.*, II, 47.
[2] ahaṅkāravimūḍhātmā kartāham iti manyatē.—*B. G.*, III, 27.
[3] guṇā guṇēṣu vartanta iti matvā na sajjatē.—*B. G.*, III, 28.

to the action and reaction of the *guṇas*, is not influenced by the conceit " I am the doer," and seeks to renounce the egocentric mentality or *ahaṅkāra*. The formula is expressed thus : " So act that you may regard all action as determined by the *guṇas* of *prakṛti* and not as determined by the *ātman*." *Karma Yōga* thus consists in abandoning not the deed, but the doer-consciousness. It is the process of self-realization by self-renouncement or self-stripping ; the most essential requisite of *Karma Yōga* is the shedding of selfishness and the giving up of the false notion taking the form " I am the doer " and " the world is mine." The ethical idea of self-renunciation is thus at first negative, but as it fills up in meaning, it leads to self-realization.

The performance of disinterested duty presupposes the *Sāṅkhyan* knowledge of the spiritual self as contrasted with the empirical 'me' or *dēhātmā* and the application of the knowledge to *Karma Yōga* ; it is thus a synthesis of scientific theory and moral practice. *Karma Yōga* combines rational insight and active endeavour, and when the *yōgin* is well-disciplined, he becomes *sthitaprajña* or steadfast in knowledge, and is definitely on the road to self-realization or *ātmajñāna*. There are four stages in the evolution of *yōga* from moral outlook to spiritual insight. The outgoing tendency of the mind is first arrested and directed inward, and this stage is called *yatamāna saṃjñā* or effort made to direct the mind inward.[1] In the next stage, the mind is calm, and is neither elated by success nor depressed by failure, and it is called *vyatirēka samjñā*[2]. When the mind

[1] yadā samharatē cāyam kūrmōṅgāniva sarvas'aḥ |
indriyāṇīndriyārthēbhyaḥ. . . . |—*B. G.*, II. 58.

[2] yaḥ sarvatrānabhisnēhastattatprāpya s'ubhās'ubham |
nābhinandati na dvēṣṭi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā.—*B. G.*, II. 57.

is self-centred and steady, it reaches a higher stage called *ēkēndriya saṃjñā*[1]. In this stage the *yōgin* endeavours to wipe off the indelible impress left by the effect of previous *karma* in the psycho-neural mechanism. The culmination of this process consists in the *ātman* knowing itself[2] and being satisfied with itself. Here the impress of *karma* or *vāsana* is completely destroyed, and the highest stage of steadfastness is reached. This stage is called *vas'īkāra saṁjñā*. Self-reverence and self-knowledge are the highest ideals of moral consciousness and the joy of this self-knowledge is different from hedonistic enjoyments and also Stoic or *Sāṅkhyan* detachment. When the *ātman* falsely identifies itself with *prakṛti*, it belongs to the world of sense, is imprisoned in the causality of *karma*, and subjects itself to the hazards of *rāga-dvēṣa*; but when the self knows that he is the *ātman* and not a mode of *acit*, he is morally free and enjoys *svarājya* or self-sovereignty. The bodily self seeks the lusts of the flesh and is *indriyārāma* or delighting in the senses; but the moral self subdues them and is *ātmārāma* or delighting in the *ātman*. Like the driver who has perfect control over his horses, the self subjugates the senses and acquires self-mastery,[3] and not even a *dēva* can conquer a man who has conquered himself. He attains this moral autonomy by insight and endeavour and not by the empty rationalism of the *Sāṅkhya* and the Stoic or the blind activism of the *Mīmāṁsaka*, the *Vēdic* ritualist.

Niṣkāma karma is an imperative of duty of the form "Do your duty without caring for the consequences," and

[1] vītarāgabhayakrōdhaḥ.—*B. G.*, II. 56.
[2] atmanyēvātmanā tuṣṭaḥ.—*B. G.*, II. 55.
[3] tasyēndriyāṇi vas'yāṇi sad as'vā iva sārathēḥ.—*Kaṭh. Up.*, I. iii. 6.

its sanction is based on revelation and not on reason. The ethics of *karma*, as a rational exposition of conduct is not satisfying, as the reality of the moral distinction between right and wrong cannot be logically proved. Moral consciousness presupposes the eternity of the *ātman* and the existence of the *Paramātman* or God, who is absolutely good, and it is not a postulate of natural religion, but a moral faith in revealed religion or *s'āstra*. The belief in supernatural religion, which seeks to establish divine omnipotence by sacrificing the intrinsic reality of the moral law, tends to justify the existence of unmerited suffering and the unmerited grace of God. The idea of winning divine favour without deserving it destroys the primacy and the austerity of moral life. Religion is therefore founded on ethics, and in a true ethical religion, omnipotence and justice go together. The law of *karma* is founded on, and fulfilled in, the divine idea of justice and righteousnees. The imperative of *niṣkāma karma* is a divine command, which has an absolute claim upon our obedience, and the violation of the law is the repudiation of the divine will and the refusal to listen to the voice of God in the inner moral consciousness of mankind. The kind of duty may be determined by one's temperament and station in life ; but the nature or inner motive of *karma* is the same in all, *viz.*, duty for duty's sake irrespective of inclination within and utility without. From the standpoint of ethical religion, it is more true to say that *Īs'vara* wills the good than to say that what He wills is good. God is absolutely good, and it is the aim of the ethics of *niṣkāma karma* that man ought to choose the way of goodness so that he may grow into the goodness of God. The highest moral good consists in following the categorical imperative as a duty that ought to be done and not as a coercive law that must be followed.

As classic illustrations of *niṣkāma karma*, the practice of *tapas*, *dāna*, *yajña*, and warfare may be considered. In all these cases, the *tāmasic* state of ignorance and inertia is overcome by the *rājasic* mentality of restless activity. When *sattva* dominates over *rajas*, it ousts the will to self-glorification and enables the will to be ruled by reason and to follow the course of disinterested action. While the *Vēdic* hedonist conforms to these commandments with a view to attaining earthly and celestial pleasures, the *Vēdāntin* as an expert in *Sāṅkhyan* knowledge performs them without any expectation of reward. *Tapas*[1] is a duty to the self and is the practice of self-purification in thought, word and deed, and connotes the virtues of truthfulness, *ahiṃsa* and patience. *Dāna* as a duty to others is the exercise of benevolence without any egoistic calculation, and it is a gift to the needy man in which the right hand does not know what the left hand does. *Yajña* as a duty to the gods is offering sacrifices to the *dēvas*, who help in maintaining the cosmic order, without the taint of bargaining with them for boons. The ethics of warfare condemns vindictiveness, cowardice and greed as well as misplaced pity, and it is a virtue to be practised by the *Kṣatriya* as a guardian of society. It is righteous warfare in the interests of the weak and the victimized for the protection of *dharma* and the destruction of *adharma*. It is the duty of every man to maintain the moral order of society and its solidarity by doing the duties of his station in life without asserting his egoism or exclusive

[1] . . . s'aucamārjavam
brahmacaryam ahiṃsā ca . . .—*B. G.*, XVII. 14.
anudvēgakaram vākyam satyam—*B.G.*, XVII. 15.
ātmavinigrahaḥ bhāvasams'uddhiḥ.—*B.G.*, XVII. 16.
dātavyam iti yad dānam diyatē anupakāriṇē |
dēs'ē kālē ca pātrē ca . . . —*B.G.*, XVII. 20.
aphalākāṅkṣibhiryajño vidhi dṛṣṭō ya ijyatē |
yaṣtavyamēvēti manas samādhāya . . .—*B.G.*, XVII. 1

self-feeling. These examples serve to bring out the solidarity of life in all its levels by insisting on duties rather than rights, and are far more comprehensive than the classic examples adduced in Kantian ethics. The *ātman* is not, like the things of *prakṛti*, a thing which excites the animal instincts of self-preservation, acquisitiveness, sex and pugnacity, but is a person or self in the highest sense of the term having his own intrinsic dignity. While the phenomenalized self is the slave of sensibility and self-love, the noumenal self has mastery over its mental environment and sheds its exclusiveness.

The moral advantages accruing from the practice of *niṣkāma karma* as the master thought of *Vēdāntic* morals may now be summed up before the next stage of self-realization is considered. A man who is not allured by the seductions of sensibility is a real *yōgin* and by conquering himself, he has conquered the whole world. While the sensualist falls into the pitfalls of heteronomy, the *karma yōgin* attains moral autonomy, which is more valuable than political conquest. Disinterested duty fosters reverence for the moral law and arouses the feeling of dignity and sublimity. The moral idea of *samatva* or equanimity is not a harmonious mean between the spiritual and the animal aspects of life. It brings out the superiority of soul-power over brute force. The moral philosopher is not an indifferent spectator of the drama of life, but is himself the battle ground, the contending parties and the conqueror. He avoids the extremes of the voluptuary, who abandons himself to the impulsive life of *viṣayarāga* and the ascetic who resorts to inhibition. He follows the middle course between the active and the contemplative life as it is more easy, natural and conducive to spirituality than *karma* or *karma sanyāsa*. The true moral evil is not the existence of the self in the world of embodied

life, but the falsity and falsehood of the *ahaṅkāra*-ridden ego that pretends to be the *ātman*, but is not really so. Matter is not in itself evil, but the materialistic view fosters evil-mindedness. The body is a living temple of God or *Brahmapuri*, and evil is in wrongful possession and enjoyment of it. The self is the eternal *ātman*; but it simulates *prakṛti* and suffers from the consequent errors and evils. The true *karma yōgin* sheds the egoistic feeling of *ahaṅkāra* and the commercial view of *karma*, and the moral self ascends to the higher stage of *Jñāna Yōga*. The transition from *Karma Yōga* to *Jñāna Yōga* is thus a transition from self-renouncement to self-realization, and marks a higher stage in spiritual progression. *Niṣkāma karma* is really not an end in itself, but is a means to *mukti* through self-purification and self-knowledge.

CHAPTER XIV

JÑĀNA YŌGA

KARMA YŌGA as rationalized *karma* is a direct path to self-realization or *ātmāvalōkana* and is preferred on account of its ease, naturalness, efficacy and freedom from the naturalistic fallacy of mistaking the *ātman* for the *anātman* or natural self.[1] *Karma* and *jñāna* interpenetrate each other, and by moralizing *jñāna* and rationalizing *karma*, the metaphysic of morals passes into the philosophy of the self. This goal is reached more easily by practical reason than by reason itself, as the life of reason is often emptied of moral and emotional content, and becomes a hypostatized abstraction. There is a transition from the empirical or hedonistic ethics of *kāmya karma* to the rationalistic ethics of *niṣkāma karma* and the latter view has its consummation in the philosophical ideal of self-realization. The spiritual self is no doubt more allied to the rational than to the sensitive self, and therefore *Jñāna Yōga* is more adequate to self-intuition than *Karma Yōga*; but in practice, rationalism often leads to more pitfalls than activism, and wisdom consists in rationalizing *karma* and not in abandoning it. When *karma* is illumined by *jñāna*, the metaphysical knowledge of the *ātman*, *Karma Yōga* is as effective as *Jñāna Yōga*.

[1] karmayōgasya antargatātmajñānatvād apramādatvāt sukaratvāt nirapekṣatvāt ca jyāyastvam—*Gītābhāṣya*, V. Introd.

In *Jñāna Yōga* the knowledge of the *ātman* is mediate, but in *ātmāvalōkana* it is immediate, and the best evidence for the proof of the *ātman* is in direct experience. *Ātmāvalōkana* presupposes the speculative knowledge about the self as a real possibility. There is a gradual transition from the metaphysics of morals of *niṣkāma karma* to the spiritual philosophy of *ātma kāma*. It is a passage from the moral ideal of what a man ought to do to the spiritual enquiry of what a man ought to be. It is the development of the moral 'ought' into a deeper 'is.' While doing good is an external duty, being good is an inner virtue. The *mumukṣu* who desires to know the *ātman*, is called the *āruruksu*, or one who strives to ascend to spirituality, and he ought to do his duty till he realizes the *ātman* and becomes the *ārūḍha* or awakened spirit. In the intuition of the *ātman* all activity is swallowed up. When the end is reached, there is no longer any need for endeavour. While moral life is a pursuit of truth, spiritual life connotes its possession.

The spiritual philosopher that seeks self-knowledge has the freedom to become better and realize the best, and is therefore not a slave of the causality of *karma* or *avidyā*. *Manas* is, especially to the *mumukṣu*, the free cause of either *saṃsāra* or *mukti* and though his *prārabdha karma* is a necessary consequence of his ancient *vāsanās* or inner dispositions, he is not a necessary agent or instrument of *karma*, as he has the will to win freedom or lose it. The agency ascribed to *prakṛti* and the *prakṛti*-ridden *ātman* is traceable to *avidyā* in the moral sense of *karma*[1], as contrasted with the monistic idea of *adhyāsa* and *abhāva*.

[1] It should be noted that *avidyā* in this sense is quite different from the *avidyā* of the *Advaitin*. (See *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 101.)

The *jīva* is a spiritual entity and not a false or fictitious being due to some innate nescience or self-deceiving nature of the absolute. If the idea of agency arises from *adhyāsa* and is not, like the heat of fire, the true nature of the self, which is real in itself, then moral and spiritual freedom would become illusory, and seeking self-realization itself would be a mere appearance. The *jīva* is a real self, and its desire for self-knowledge is not a delusion but a real process of self-revelation, involving the conquest of *karma* and the removal of *avidyā*. Spiritual freedom is thus different from the determinism of *karma* and the illusionism of *avidyā* and is freedom from the joint influence of *avidyā-karma*. It is the aim of *yōga* as *Karma Yōga* or *Jñāna Yōga* to help the *ātman* to free itself from the confusions of *avidyā* and the causal determinations of *karma* and shine in its own splendour. The term empirical or natural self connotes *dēhātmā* or the embodied soul or the *ātman* that has falsely identified itself with *prakṛti*; the moral self is the *karma yōgin* that has a theoretic knowledge of the *ātman* as different from *prakṛti* and does his duty in a disinterested way. The state of *ātmāvalōkana* is called the realization of the spiritual self. While the metaphysic of morals analyses the nature of *niṣkāma karma*, the philosophy of the spirit expounds the rationale of *ātmāvalōkana*. It is only by means of self-purification that the ideal of self-perfection can be achieved.

The philosophy of the *ātman* has not received due attention in the history of thought, and its realm is often regarded as a no-man's land. While materialistic monism abolishes the self by making it a by-product of matter, the absolute of the idealistic monist swallows up its very being. Even

religion in its deistic aspect seeks to exalt God at the expense of the spirit, and does not adequately bring out the full nature and status of personality. The *ātman* is not an appearance of reality, but is an entity that has its own unique nature, its existence is self-proved, and it can realize itself in intuitive perception or *ātmasākṣātkāra*. The *ātman* is not the body feeling, will or cognition, but has its own spiritual identity apart from its psycho-physical contents. The *ātman* survives its mind-body and exists on its own account. It has a unity and continuity in the incarnate state of *saṃsāra* as well as in the discarnate state of *mukti* on account of its moral and spiritual consciousness and striving for *mukti*. This experience is evidence of its personal immortality. Persons may have the same intelligence, but the self-feeling carries its own personal or spiritual worth. The *ātman*, distinguished from its empirical contents, is not impoverished thereby, but shines as an eternal substance, subject or self, and even the monist that denies duality, has to posit a plurality of *jīvas* to satisfy the claims of practical reason. The duality of the subject-object relation is different from the duality between two subjects. They are mutually related, and one subject cannot be resolved into another. If A falls asleep, B does not vanish, but is quite awake. A and B are therefore poly-centric. In the case of love between two persons each is the subject of love as well as the object of love, owing to the intrinsic value of the persons who enter into the relation. The relation is spiritual and not logical and is the very foundation of inter-subjective intercourse and the consciousness of kind. The world of souls is a spiritual realm transcending conceptual knowledge which suffers from the perils of scepticism on the one hand and of subjectivism on the other. It is the fatal defect of pantheism, at least in its lower

form, that it recognizes only God and nature as a short-cut to unity, and omits the philosophy of the self. It is the self that enquires into nature and God, and, by relinquishing its materialistic associations, seeks to know itself and its inner self. It is the supreme merit of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* that it lays special stress on the philosophy of the self, and insists on *ātmadars'ana* or vision of the self as a prelude to the philosophy of religion.[1]

The realization of the *pratyagātman* or inner self, the goal of *Jñāna Yōga*, is achieved only by a rigorous moral and spiritual discipline. The first requisite in this *yōgic* process is the training in *samatva* or spiritual equanimity, the exact meaning of which is, however, difficult to define in logical terms. The instinct of acquisitiveness can never coexist with the yearning of the *mumukṣu*, and it profits him little to gain the whole world and lose his *ātman*. The renouncement of economic goods is therefore indispensable to spiritual progress, and the aspirant should regard dust and diamond as equally worthless. The *dvandvas* like success and failure, pleasure and pain, and likes and dislikes lead to the dilemma of the divided life. The moral self should therefore practise *samatva*, which includes the virtues of indifference, endurance and detachment in an ascending scale. Introspective life implies indifference to the utilitarian ideas of success and failure. There are three ways of overcoming the hedonistic hazards of pleasure and pain. Every pleasure is fraught with pain, and is therefore to be avoided; or every pain is a blessing in disguise, and is therefore to be

[1] parama prāpya bhūtasya parasya brahmaṇaḥ . . . prāptyupāyabhūtam tad upāsanam . . . tadaṅgabhūtam ātmajñānapūrvakarmānuṣṭhāna sādhyam prāptuḥ pratyagātmanaḥ yāthatmyadars'anam.—*Gītā Bhāṣyam*, VII. Introduction.

endured; or both alike should be treated with indifference. The twin-evils of *rāga-dvēṣa* are attributable to *abhimāna* or false identification with the body, and they can be overcome by assuming the attitude of the indifferent spectator or dissociation of the self from its fleshly cravings. The psychology of the three *guṇas* enables the *mumukṣu* to transcend the inertia of *tamas* and the restless drive of *rajas* by disinterested work and to attain the *nirguṇa* stage or detachment from the influence of *prakṛti*. *Samatva* also connotes the state of tranquillity which is awakened by subduing the *vāsanās* and practising *Karma Yōga*. In any case, it does not refer to the Greek idea of balancing the extremes by averaging them, or by arriving at a harmonious mean between spirituality and animality. In the positive sense, it includes the sanity of thought, the sobriety of self-conquest and the serenity of knowing the effulgent *ātman*. It is a *yōgic* attitude which can be better experienced than explained in conceptual terms, but the *sādhana* can be expounded in a scientific way.

Jñāna niṣṭha starts with the reflective analysis of the ideas of *pratyagātman* or the inner self and *dēhātman* or the embodied self and the progression in spiritual endeavour. The body is not the *ātman*, and animal perfection is neither intelligible nor attainable, though physical well-being is essential to spirituality. Even self-culture and the formation of *sātvic* habits are only means to self-knowledge. Spiritual endeavour is both a negative method of *vairāgya* or self-renouncement and a positive way of *abhyāsa*[1] or practice of introversion. The former is a process of self-stripping and self-simplification, which is known as the method of

[1] *B. G.*, VI. 35.

spiritual induction. As in the case of gold in the refiner's fire, the dross of *ahaṅkāra* is removed. But self-discipline is not to be confused with self-mutilation or self-extinction, as the renunciation of the lower self and the realization of the higher self go together. The more spiritual a thing is, the more real it is, and the *jñānī* seeks to remove the veils of *ajñāna* and enter into the inner sanctuary of *ātmajñāna* as the *sākṣin* or spectator of the psychic changes. Introversion consists in withdrawing the mind from the cinema shows of ancient *vāsanās* and the distractions of surface consciousness and focussing the will on the centre. Thought is not merely suppressed but is thought away. By entering into the inner sanctuary, consciousness freed from functioning on the sensuous plane seeks to return to the centre and this is derived from mono-ideism. In this way the *jñānī* enters into the orison of inner quiet; but even this state is only a half-way house to *ātmajñāna*. The state of inner quiet should not lapse into the evils of quietism or *laya* like passivity and nothingness, which is like the repose of a log of wood. Quietism is a danger zone in spiritual ascent, as consciousness is likely to be attenuated and destroyed in that rarefied atmosphere. In *ātmāvalōkana* the *vṛttis* or mental modes of *prakṛti* alone are destroyed and not the self. The *ātman* is not annulled but is enriched in the process of *abhyāsa* or repeated practice, and it is therefore idle to say that it is a method of elimination or abstraction.

The *āruruksu*, or *yōgin* desirous of ascent, who desires *ātmajñāna*, is no longer allured by wealth or bound by social ties, as his consciousness is withdrawn from all objective or external activities and turned inward. The *yōgin* retires to a sequestered and pure spot and focusses his *citta* or mind on

the *ātman* by subduing its fugitive and fickle-minded nature. The intuition of the *ātman* is his only endeavour and end, and it alone gives him supreme satisfaction. *Yōgic sādhana* consists of the eight well-known stages of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. *Yama* is the moral practice of truthfulness, *ahiṃsā*, contentment, continence, poverty, and the will to receive no favours or benefits. Continence is the sublimation of sex-energy or *rētas* into spiritual energy or *ōjas*. *Niyama* is the transition from restraint to self-restraint and the discipline of the mind-body resulting in self-purification, study, reflection, austerity and the attunement of the mind to the will of God. *Āsana* is the physical control of the body by keeping it stiff, symmetrical and straight and thus overcoming its *tamāsic* languor and *rājasic* restlessness. *Prāṇāyāma* is the control of *prāṇa* or the vital breath by balancing the respiratory function of *prāṇa* and *apāna* with a view to attain psychic control. These four stages are steps to *yōgic* introversion and are not *yōga* in the strict sense of the term. *Pratyāhāra* is the arresting of the outgoing senses and attuning them to the inner sense. *Dhāraṇā* is the focussing of *manas* on an object, by withdrawing it from the distractions of sense and the tumult of the *vāsanās* or dispositions. When the self-centred *citta* passes into the state of ceaseless introversion, *dhāraṇā* deepens into *dhyāna*. The habit of philosophic reflection spiritualizes the mind by removing the distraction of *manas*, the restlessness of *citta* and the ego-centric conceit of *ahaṅkāra*. Thought ceases when it reflects on itself, but it is not a case of suppression or extinction. *Dhyāna* has its completion in *samādhi*, when the contemplation of the *ātman* becomes a direct intuition. In *samādhi*, consciousness ascends from the conative and reflective levels and returns to its own pure state of aloneness and the self-effulgent joy of

sahasrāra. The process of *yōga* is thus a philosophic and spiritual discipline, and is not to be falsely identified with mere psychic control, occultism, or the *siddhi*-seeking mentality. The *yōgic* endeavour of the *āruruksu* to ascend is consummated in the intuition of the *ārūḍha*. In the *ārūḍha*, the ancient *karma* complex is entirely burnt out in the fire of spirituality.

The end as self-realization is also a social good, and the social ideal here implied is ultimately that of the *mumukṣu* and not that of the citizen of a state or of a political philosopher. The concept of social progress is a spiritual ideal, and is different from that of the process of nature. While process is a law of nature or *prakṛti* or ceaseless change of evolution, the idea of progress is governed by the rule of *karma* and the freedom of the moral self. The cosmos hangs together as a unity and is conditioned by the law of causation; but the progress of humanity has no meaning apart from the spiritual growth of the individuals that constitute society. This view is opposed to that of utilitarianism and humanism. Humanity is not an aggregate of individuals in which each man counts as one and no one as more than one, as such an arithmetical idea is entirely alien to the *ātmanistic* theory of progress. Likewise, the humanistic ideal of striving for a better world as a substitute for other-worldliness is a species of secular morality, which is not founded on the spiritual values of life, and has therefore no stability. Humanism may be a corrective to the materialistic and supernaturalistic idea of life, but it may have its nemesis in exclusive individualism. The *Vēdāntic* ideal of society is not that of an aggregate of atomic individuals or of an organism, but that of a spiritual community of *jīvas* providing an

opportunity for the gradual realization of each self as an *ātman* and not as a thing. It starts with the economic end of the acquisition of wealth or *artha* for the welfare of all, and ascends to the hedonistic end of life as the disciplined satisfaction of desires or *kāma*, and then to the moral life of righteousness or *dharma* as contrasted with the assertion of rights. Ultimately it ends with the ideal of self-realization as the goal of individual and social life. In such a spiritual community, the external goods have value only in so far as they promote the goods of the soul or spiritual welfare. The physical life of each man in terms of cosmic ethics is sustained by his appropriation of the goods of the world, secured from the five elements, his parents, his teachers and the gods, and a spiritual scheme of society consists in doing our duty to the cosmos and not in the assertion of exclusive rights. The ideal of the chief *ṛṇas* and *yajñas* is thus based on the consciousness of giving back to the universe what has been received from it. Though the nature of a man's duty may be determined psychologically by his station in life and *svadharma*, his ethical motive is deduced from the universal ideal of righteousness.

The social side of spiritual life is briefly illustrated in the institutions of warfare, private property and marriage. The ethics of evolution recognizes and provides for differences in the development of moral and spiritual life due to the individual disposition and the environment of the evolving self. But the final spiritual ideal of the *jīva* is the realization of the inner worth of each self, the similarity of the attributive consciousness of all *jīvas* and the solidarity of life in all the levels of the three-storeyed universe. The institution of warfare is inevitable in biological life on account of the assertion of the

pugnacious instinct, but is not essential. Its evil is minimized by the idea of *dharma yuddha* or righteous warfare confined to the *Kṣatriya* who is qualified to fight without ill-will or egoism, for the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness with the deathless courage of a spiritual conviction that the self neither slays another nor is slain, and is eternal, and that it is the body alone that is subject to birth and death. This is a middle course between militarism and pacifism and eventually leads to the ethics of *ahiṃsā* and universal love. The institution of private property may be justified realistically as the organisation of the acquisitive instinct, which has its origin in the twin evils of *ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra* or the egoistic feelings of 'I' and 'mine.' But from the idealistic point of view, the theory of property is freed from the sense of possession, and wealth becomes a medium for developing the self and social unity. Riches alone may be hated but not the rich man who gets wealth for giving it to others. The institution of marriage serves as the ethical foundation for the unity of the family which is the training ground for the promotion of the virtue of universal brotherhood. It starts realistically as a response to a biological need, passes through the idealistic stage as an opportunity for fostering monogamous fidelity and selfless love, and finally it promotes the ideal of spiritual at-one-ment. Fraternal love has full meaning only on the ethical and spiritual levels of life and not on the economic and the political. Thus the ultimate motive of all social institutions is the promotion of the unity of all *jīvas* as a realm of ends by removing the hindrances to such a consummation.

The experience of the spiritual unity of all *jīvas* is analysed by the author of the *Gītā* in his exposition of the nature of the *ārūḍha* in verses 29 to 32 of Chapter VI. Looking alike

on all things, the *yōgin* who has intuited the *ātman* sees the same self in all *jīvas* owing to the similarity of their spiritual intelligence or *dharmabhūtajñāna*. It is only the bodily feeling caused by *karma* that creates the separatist consciousness and generates *rāga dvēṣa*. But the seer who has *ātma dṛṣṭi* or soul-sight and sweet reasonableness or *vinaya* intuits the same *ātman* in a dog as in a god. In a higher stage, the *yōgin* has a glimpse of *Paramātman*, the Supreme Self, as the pervading identity in all *jīvas*, and sees Him in all beings and all beings in Him. In the next higher stage the spiritual experience of this unity consciousness is further enriched. The spiritual insight of *ātmajñāna* is completely acquired in the fourth stage by the exhibition of universal sympathy in which the *jñāni* realizes the kinship of all *jīvas* and regards the joys and sorrows of others as his own.[1] Sympathy is not merely a feeling that impels the *yōgin*, but is a spiritual motive that induces him to action. It overcomes the dualism between egoism and altruism, as the bodily consciousness that separates *jīvas* is transcended in the *ārūḍha* state. It is deeper than the ideal of universal brotherhood, as it is an appeal to spiritual kinship without any taint of the individualistic consciousness. The monistic theory that abolishes individuality affords no scope for such social love, as it affirms absolute identity and not the unity or equality of all *jīvas*. If the *yōgin* loves his neighbour as himself on account of the identity between their two selves, there is no scope for brotherly love or benevolence. *Vēdāntic* ethics from the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* standpoint demands not only self-knowledge by the removal of error but also self-denial by the destruction of egotism; it

[1] sarva bhūta hitē ratāḥ |—*B. G.*, V. 25.
s'rūyatām dharma sarvasvaṃ s'rutvācāpyavadhāryatāṃ |
ātmanaḥ pratikūlāni pareṣām na samācarēt |—*Mahābhārata* quoted in the *Tātparyacandrikā*, V. 25.

therefore gives the deepest explanation of the philosophy of the spiritual and social self.

The true meaning of service as *kaiṅkarya* may be summed up in this connection by contrasting it with the other theories of social ethics, secular as well as spiritual, which are advocated in the east and the west. All the theories agree in their opposition to egoism and self-centredness. The ideal of material progress like the prolongation of life and its pleasures, the democratic dissemination of secular knowledge and hedonistic views are based on the animal faith that physical well-being is more valuable than spiritual welfare. The utilitarian theory that insists on the greatest happiness of the greatest number is only a refined form of egoism as it is founded on enlightened self-love and prudence. Positivism goes a step further when it defines the religion of humanity as love and service to mankind as a whole in the collective and universal sense. But even this view is untenable as it is no satisfaction to the individual to know that, when humanity persists and progresses, he himself withers and perishes in the process. Communism also upholds the morality of collectivism in its attempt to establish a classless society on an economic basis. but it fails to recognize the intrinsic worth of personality and the higher values of life. Humanism remedies this defect when it stresses the dignity of man and the need for promoting social order; but when it prefers better-worldliness to other-worldliness it is a secular view and has no stability as better-worldliness is still a form of worldliness without any spiritual value. All these theories of social progress bring to light the difficulties of overcoming, from the secular standpoint, the dualism between egoism and altruism, individualism and socialism. A new orientation is given to the problem by the

Indian philosopher in his theories of *karma* and reincarnation and the need for the recognition of the kinship of all living beings as *jīvas* and for *jīvakāruṇya*. Buddhism and Jainism favour, more than any other religion, the ethics of *ahiṃsā* and *jīvakāruṇya* extended even to the sub-human species. But the positive motive for universal benevolence is lacking in both as the first denies human personality and the second has no use for divine personality. There are pragmatists in the west who cherish the will to believe in a personal but finite God fighting against evil with the active co-operation of man ; but the will to believe is often a make-believe as a finite God is no God at all. The absolutists explain the need for benevolence or *lōkasaṅgraha* in terms of the identity philosophy revealed in the text "Thou art That" and justify neighbourly love on the ground that the neighbour and oneself are identical. Deussen who extols this philosophy, however, thinks that it is Christianity that brings out its moral side and expounds the meaning of social love. The question of brotherhood has no place in the identity philosophy and the idea of the Heavenly Father is too remote to bring out spiritual intimacy. The true meaning of brotherhood can be explained only by the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* teaching of the immanence of Brahman in all *jīvas* and their essential unity or similarity.

The spiritual philosophy of the *ātman* which refers to *ātmāvalōkana* or self-realization is different from the religion of God-realization attained by *bhakti* and *prapatti*. The philosopher who prefers the joy of *kaivalya* to the bliss of divine life is called a *kēvala*. To him seeking God is only a means to his seeing the self. He seeks the spiritual freedom which arises from dissociation from

prakṛti and also dependence on the cosmic ruler. The *kēvala* is a contemplative who devotes himself to *yōgic* introversion by withdrawing his mind from its outgoing tendencies. The *ātman* is by nature immutable (*akṣara*) and self-effulgent and is not to be identified with the embodied self. It is the goal of the *kevala* to intuit his self by abandoning the falls and fleeting ideas of ' I ' and ' mine,' regain his essential and eternal nature and thus attain freedom from birth and death and the ills of *saṃsāra*. The state of *kaivalya* thus attained may be called the flight of ' the Alone to the Alone ' in which the *ātman* enjoys inner quiet and is self-satisfied. Soul-culture no doubt leads to sanity and peace or *s'ānti*. But the quiet of *kaivalya* often leads to quietism and subjectivism and the godless state of *Sāṅkhyan kaivalya* and *nirvāṇa*. The *kēvala* is stranded in solid singleness without the glow of godliness. His spiritual attainment is only the orison of quiet and not the orison of divine union and is at best a half-way house to the perfection of *mukti*. There is some difference of opinion among the *Vis'iṣṭād-vaitic* philosophers regarding the value and destiny of the *kēvala*. One school, that of the *Tenkalais*, maintains the view that *kaivalya* is not on the road to *mukti* but is *mukti* itself in which the *mukta* enjoys the ' peace that passeth understanding ' but is only in the outskirts of *Paramapada* and has no hope of intuiting God and enjoying the bliss of communion. But the *Vaḍakalai* school favours the theory that the *kēvala* is on the path to perfection and will eventually reach the divine goal. The path of devotion leads to God and not away from Him and the instinct which the *kēvala* has for the infinite soon asserts itself and urges him to shed his sinfulness arising from self-satisfaction and self-alienation. He is on the right path in so far as he has discriminated between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, freed himself from the shackles of *prakṛti* and

turned his attention Godward. The *kēvala* is transformed into the *jñānī* that hungers for God and attains the bliss of immortal communion with Him. Thus, of the four types of devotees to God mentioned in the *Gīta*, the *jñāni* and the *kēvala* return no more to the world of *saṃsāra*[1], while the other two who only long for the pleasures of this world and of *svarga* continue their career of births and deaths in *saṃsāra*, though they also attain freedom eventually. The spiritual consciousness of the *kēvala* has its fruition only in religious consciousness.

The religious consciousness consists in shifting the centre of reference from the *ātman* to *Paramātman*, and this effects a revolution in our life, which is of far greater importance than the Copernican revolution. While the astronomer realizes the littleness of the earth and the greatness of the sun that draws it to itself, the religious man or *bhakta* knows the emptiness of the earth-bound self and the saving might of God who is the source and centre of all living beings. The knowledge of the finite self has its religious fulfilment in the integral experience of the infinite, which is its ground and goal. *Kaivalya* is no doubt on the plane of *mukti* or on the path to it, but the satisfaction of *ātmajñāna* has little or no value when it is contrasted with the bliss of Brahman. The *Gītā* starts with the morals of *niṣkāma karma* and the philosophy of *ātmajñāna* and ends with the religious exposition of *Bhakti Yōga* as the highest state in the philosophy of religion. *Bhakti Yōga* is itself a disciplinary process involving different stages; but, in all its stages, it is dominated by the single aim of seeking Brahman as *Bhagavān* and seeing Him face to face.

[1] Rāmānuja's *Gītā Bhāṣya*, VIII. 15.

Certain schools of monism begin with the subject of experience or self-consciousness as the starting point of philosophy and end in subjectivism. *Bhakti Yōga* does not thrive in the atmosphere of such subjectivism and solipsism. Subjectivism starts with sensationalism and ends with solipsism. But in all cases it denies extra-mental reality or an external world order. The existence of a thing is only in its mental experience. The first stage is the philosophy of subjective idealism which holds that *esse* is *percipi* or *dṛṣṭi* is *sṛṣṭi*. Matter is only mind-dependent and its primary and secondary qualities are only a cluster of sensations, In a higher stage called objective idealism, reality is said to be mental in the logical as opposed to the psychological sense; but even the logical idea of the object is not the object. In a still higher stage known as transcendental idealism, the world as constituted by space, time and causality is said to be 'my' idea. They are subjective forms of the intellect, which are presupposed in experience and not deduced from it. Absolute idealism goes a step further, when the whole of reality is made to rest in the 'I.' Reality is mind-begotten, mind-made and dissolved into the mind. The absolute 'I' falsely imagines itself to be the world. In this way, subjective idealism in all its later or more developed forms ends in solipsism, and cannot escape the charge of the ego-centric fallacy. This conclusion is confirmed by the monistic argument that truth is a passage from the objective to the subjective and that the realism of the waking state should lead to the truer state of the mentalism of the dream state. Cosmology is thus dissolved in epistemology and epistemology is dissolved in psychology, and the psychology of *ēka-jīva*, the single-self theory, is the only view of truth. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* repudiates this subjectivistic philosophy and its super-solipsism, and upholds the philosophy of the absolute as the self of the

universe of *cit* and *acit* and their Lord who is the *s'arīrin.* It reinterprets idealism in terms of personalism which deals with persons or *puruṣas* and their ideas and ideals and personalism in terms of supra-personalism dealing with the absolute as super-personal or *Puruṣōttama. Bhakti* shifts the centre from the 'I' to the 'Thou' or from the finite consciousness of the *puruṣa* to the consciousness of *Puruṣōttama* who is the world ground as well as the inner ruler. He is the eternal 'other' whether He is the internal or the external Self, and *bhakti* is the longing of the *jīva* as the *s'arīra* to become one with its self or *s'arīrin* and thus serve His ends.

CHAPTER XV

BHAKTI YŌGA

THE scheme of *Karma Yōga*, *Jñāna Yōga* and *Bhakti Yōga* marks the different stages in the progressive realization of *mukti*. Caught up in the causal cycle of *avidyā-karma*, the *mumukṣu* at long last reflects on the waste of soul life and the perishing values of empirical life from the bare existence of the amoeba to the joys of *Brahmalōka*, and longs to go back to his home in the absolute. *Karma Yōga* is the path of disinterested duty illumined by the knowledge of the distinction between the eternal *ātman* and the empirical ego of *prakṛti* and the gradual renunciation of egoism or the conceit of *ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra* or the feeling of 'I' and 'mine.' *Jñāna Yōga* is the process of self-realization in which the self retires from the circumference to the centre, and regains its own state. But it is the orison of quiet, which may lapse into the pitfalls of quietism, and is not the supreme end of life, as it is a godless state of aloneless without the glow of love. *Upāsanā* or *bhakti* is the unitive way in which the *mumukṣu* sheds his egoism and ego-centric outlook, attunes himself to the will of God as *Puruṣōttama*, and yearns for eternal communion with Him. It is therefore the consummation of moral and spiritual culture. *Karma Yōga* and *Jñāna Yōga* are means to *mukti* only through

Bhakti Yōga. *Bhakti Yōga* is the direct pathway to perfection, as it leads to the very heart of the religious consciousness. The path to *mukti* is a progressive realization of Brahman, and each *Yōga* is a stepping stone to a higher stage. The *yōgin* equipped with *vivēka* or discrimination and *vairāgya* or self-renunciation gives up his egoism, realizes his eternal nature as the *ātman* and gradually attains his home in the absolute or Brahman.

Though the ideal of every *dars'ana* is the attainment of *mukti* or freedom from the travails of *saṃsāra*, there are sharp differences of opinion amongst them in respect of the means employed to secure it. The chief views are explained by Rāmānuja with a view to proving how by mutual criticism they lend themselves to a reinterpretation in terms of *bhakti* as the chief means of *mukti*. The *Mīmāmsaka* insists on the primacy of the moral law of *dharma* and this conclusion may be shown to satisfy the tests of *s'ruti*, *yukti* and *anubhava*. Every *Vēdic* proposition has a practical purpose, and action is its main import. The performance of *dharma* for its own sake as in the case of *nitya-karmas* is the highest ideal of conduct. When the *Upaniṣad* extols knowledge, it sets forth the true nature of the active self alone, and knowledge is only auxiliary to action. Every state of consciousness is conational; and even introspective insight is only an ideo-motor action, and thus there is action even in apparent inaction. It is well known that Janaka who was a knower of Brahman, preferred the active life to the contemplative. Thus the *Mīmāmsaka* proves his conclusion that the performance of *Vēdic* duty is the only end of conduct.

The *Advaitin* goes to the other extreme when he refers to *jñāna* as the only means to *mukti*. *Mukti* to him is the direct

cognition of Brahman as the eternal, changeless and ever self-realized, and it is not therefore due to the intervention of any *Vēdic* injunction. While the *Karma Kāṇḍa* sets forth the truth of difference or *bhēda*, the *Jñāna Kāṇḍa* affirms the reality of non-difference or *abhēda*, and *jñāna* and *karma* are contradictory. In the light of scripture, the *Advaitin* concludes that *karma* is the effect of *avidyā* and *jñāna* is the cessation of *avidyā* and *karma*. For example, the moment the rope is cognized as such, the illusion that it is a snake is dispelled. Brahman, being eternally self-realized, cannot be originated, attained or modified. As the thinker of thought Brahman cannot be the object of knowledge or objectified. The *Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin* accepts the *Advaita* contention, but objects to its conclusion that knowledge is immediate and not a process of knowing. Brahma-*jñāna* is a real progression in knowledge involving the different stages of *dhyāna* or mediation as enjoined in the *s'ruti*. In the example of the rope-snake illusion, disillusionment arises not from the bare cognition of the rope, but from actual ocular verification. The *Vēdāntic* imperative that Brahman should be reflected upon and realized has more value than the *Vēdic* law of duty, as it directly leads to *mukti*. By following the *Mīmāmsaka* principle of *niyōga* and the *Vēdāntic* rule of meditation, the *Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin* gradually gives up the sense of plurality and intuits the self-identity of Brahman in the end. The allied theory of *niṣprapañcīkarana-niyōga* defines *mukti* acosmically as the knowledge of Brahman by the destruction of the world order. But the theory of *niyōga* as an unseen external agency has already been shown to be mechanical and meaningless. The view that *Advaita* negates the world order was proved to be untenable as *Advaita* destroys only the sense of separateness and not the world itself. These two views of *niyōga* which try to combine the philosophy of

Advaita with the ethics of *Mīmāmsa* are neither philosophical nor ethical. The *Bhēdābhēdavādin* steps in at this stage and tries to reconcile the counter-claims of *karma* and *jñāna* by his theory of *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* as the only way to *mukti*. He accepts the equal validity and value of the method of *jñāna* or contemplative insight and *karma* or moral endeavour. The *jīva* suffers from the errors and evils of *avidyā-karma* and the only way of overcoming these barriers lies in the co-ordination of *jñāna* and *karma*. *Jñāna* is the continuous meditation on the *abhēda* aspect of Brahman and *karma* is rationalized as *niṣkāma karma* and then spiritualized as *Brahmārpaṇa*. *Jñāna* gives a meaning to moral endeavour, and *karma* furnishes the dynamic side of spiritual insight. In this way the *mumukṣu* avoids the pitfalls of the *Vēdic* ritualism of the *Mīmāmsaka* and the illusionism of *Māyāvāda* and utilizes the highest values of moral and spiritual life in the meditational process. But its chief defect lies, as has been frequently pointed out before, in the attribution of imperfections to Brahman.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita steers clear of the fallacies of the *Mīmāmsaka* on the one hand and of the schools of monism on the other, as it accepts the reality of experience in all its levels and the relative values of the moral and metaphysical disciplines detailed in the *Karma Kāṇḍa* and the *Jñāna Kāṇḍa*. *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* and *Uttara Mīmāmsa* are integrally related as one *S'ārīraka S'āstra*, and there is continuity and unity in the two parts, which are the distinguishable elements of a systematic whole. The monistic view that the *s'āstra* affirms the self-contradiction between *karma, upāsanā* and *jñāna* finally negates negation, and is itself sublated by the self-identity of Brahman. It tends to destroy spiritual faith and faith in reason itself, and every moral and spiritual endeavour

is shipwrecked at the very entrance to the absolutist haven. The only escape from such all-destroying scepticism lies in abandoning the dangers of the pan-illusion theory and following the safe path of affirmation enshrined in the truth that Vāsudēva pervades all things and thinkers as the *s'arīrin* or inner self. The wisdom of *Vēdānta* is the natural completion of *Vēdic* knowledge and is not its cancellation, and from the first *Sūtra* of the *Karma Mīmāmsa* beginning with the ethical enquiry into *dharma* to the last *Sūtra* in the *Brahma Mīmāmsa* ending with the entry of the self into the eternal bliss of Brahman, from which there is no return, the scripture describes with meticulous accuracy the different mile-stones in the spiritual progress of the *jīva*. There is thus a real transition, logical as well as chronological, from the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* to the *Uttara Mīmāmsa* and the *Mīmāmsaka* is transfigured into a *mumukṣu*, when he realizes that the value of *karma* is transitory and transient and that of *jñāna* is eternal and infinite. Every judgment, *Vēdic* and *Vēdāntic*, has a certain relevancy or specific end. The former stresses the end of conduct as the attainment of *Svarga*, while the latter refers to the attainment of *apavarga* or *Mōkṣa* as the supreme end of life. The moral imperative or 'ought' has its religious foundation in the knowledge of Brahman and thus involves a deeper 'is.' The facts of sense-perception, which are out there and the acts of moral life, which aim at the 'ought,' lead to the religious experience of Brahman which is more valuable than the things of *prakṛti* which are affirmed, and the imperatives of *dharma* which are enjoined. To the *mumukṣu*, every judgment ultimately connotes the whole of reality as Brahman, and his whole life is dedicated to the meditation on Brahman as his very Self. Meditation deepens into *bhakti* and it is the practice of *bhakti* that becomes the

direct pathway to Brahman. The entire body of the *Vēdānta Sūtras* dealing with the nature of Brahman and the means of attaining Him is opposed to the *Advaitic* distinction between a lower and a higher knowledge of Brahman or *apara vidyā* and *para vidyā*, the former dealing with the meditation on *saguṇa* Brahman or the absolute in an empirical dress, which is a concession to the *avidyā*-ridden mind, and the latter affiming the self-identity of the absolute, which is directly intuited and not attained. The *Vēdānta Sūtras*, which form a systematic exposition of the *Upaniṣads*, begin with the definition of Brahman as the ground of all existent beings[1] and end with the description of the eternal[2] bliss of the true *mukti*, which is the *summum bonum* of religious endeavour. The *Advaitic* contention that the beginning or *upakrama* and the end or *upasaṃhāra* of the whole philosophy refer only to the exoteric doctrine of the lower Brahman and lower knowledge is not only a violation of the rules of *Vēdic* interpretation, but is a serious charge against the integrity of the *Sūtrakāra*, the recognized expositor of the system of *Vēdānta*. The modern view of the critical philosopher that the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā* support Rāmānuja and that S'aṅkara faithfully represents the monism of the *Upaniṣads* does no justice either to Rāmānuja, whose dialectic criticism of *Advaita* in the form of *saptavidha anupapatti* is unsurpassed, nor to the heart of S'aṅkara, the immortal author of *Bhaja Gōvindam*, who is more a *Brahmavādin* than a *Māyāvādin*. Besides, this method of speculation may cut both ways and lead nowhere. Some say that the *Upaniṣads* are mere guesses at truth and do not constitute a systematic whole; others hold that they teach divergent doctrine, and still others seek their support in

[1] janmādyasya yataḥ—*V. S.*, I. i. 2.
[2] na ca punarāvartatē na ca punarāvartatē.—*V. S.*, IV. iv. 22.

justification of their *siddhānta*. It is therefore safe to follow the traditional view upheld by all *ācāryas* that the scriptural authority of the *Upaniṣads* (implying the oneness of all the *S'ākhas*), the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā* is an integral unity, and the validity of a system depends on its coherence with the whole *s'āstra* and its drift and spirit. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, as a systematic and self-contained philosophy of religion, sees no difference between the absolute of philosophy and the God of religion, and reconciles the claims of logic with the needs of religious feeling. Brahman is the very heart of logic, and satisfies the logic of the heart, and there is really no paradox in this statement.

Brahman is one, and is the goal of the different *upāsanas*.[1] The historical view that *Bhakti Yōga* is the result of the fusion of the orthodox teachings of *Brahmōpāsanā* with the non-*Vēdic* teaching of the *Pāñcarātra* that *Bhagavān* is the Supreme Self, and with the later theory of the *avatārs* in which heroes are deified, is a strange assumption, which is not really historical at all. History deals with the facts given in sense perception and religion with super-sensuous truths. History therefore oversteps its bounds, when it refers to spiritual truths, which can only be discerned and described spiritually. Besides, such conclusions arrived at by historians are merely stories coloured by presuppositions and prejudices of the historian turned religious thinker. It is a more scientific conclusion to reject the whole religious thesis than to pull it to pieces and then to piece them together. It is the supreme merit of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* that it follows the logic of religious intuition, and concludes that the Brahman of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Sūtras*, the *Vāsudēva* of the *Gītā*, the *Bhagavān* of the *Pāñcarātra* and the

[1] *S.B.*, III, iii, 1 to 4, *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, pp. 629 to 632.

ārcā of the *Āḷvārs* connote the same Supreme Self, and insists on *Bhakti Yōga* as the direct means of knowing Brahman. It is untenable to say that philosophers, who have Stoic equanimity and who shy at sentimentalism, accept the *nirguṇa* Brahman of S'aṅkara and allow *saguṇa* Brahman, which is less than the absolute, to accommodate the mass mind or average intelligence. This dual standpoint is admittedly a learned error or true lie and it freezes the heart, misses the delights of devotion, and dries up the springs of sympathy and love. But *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* meets the demands of metaphysics, and satisfies the supreme call of love by its theory or *bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna* or *jñāna* turned *bhakti*.

The practice of *bhakti* presupposes certain elaborate disciplines, which include not only the sublimation of feeling but also the training of the intellect and the will. They are known as the *sādhana saptaka* or the sevenfold moral and spiritual discipline, contrasted with the *sādhana catuṣṭaya* or the fourfold discipline of *Advaita*. The *Advaitic sādhana* also consists of the triple discipline of thought, feeling and will, defined as *vivēka*, *vairāgya* and the disciplines of *s'ama*, *dama* and the rest. But, strictly speaking, *Advaitic sādhana* is self-discrepant, as its idea of *mukti* is the cessation of *avidyā* or the sense of plurality and not a progressive attainment. *Jñāna* is the sublation of *ajñāna*, and there can be no degrees and stages in denying the false. The opening sentences in the two *Sūtra Bhāṣyas* strike the key note of their *Vēdāntic* theory. S'aṅkara defines the aim of the *S'ārīraka Mīmāmsa* as the knowledge of the identity of Brahman by the removal of *adhyāsa* or the illusion arising from the super-imposition of the nature of Brahman on non-Brahman. *Brahmajñāna* is immediate as Brahman

is ever self-realized. The opening sentence of Rāmānuja's *S'rī Bhāṣya* reveals the contrast: "May my *buddhi* or *jñāna* blossom into *bhakti* or devotion to Brahman or S'rīnivāsa whose nature is revealed in the *Upaniṣad* as the self, that, out of the *līlā* or sport of love, creates, sustains and reabsorbs the whole *bhuvana* or universe with a view to saving the *jīvas* that seek His love." Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of the *jīva* is the *prāpaka* as well as the *prāpya*, the endeavour as well as the end, and the scheme of *sādhana saptaka* is helpful in the building up of *bhakti*.

The seven *sādhanas*[1] to *upāsanā* or *bhakti* are enumerated and explained by the *Vākyakāra* as *vivēka*, *vimōka*, *abhyāsa*, *kriyā*, *kalyāṇa*, *anavasāda* and *anuddharṣa*.[2] *Vivēka* is the purification of the body or *kāya s'uddhi* by means of *s'ātvic* food. The body is *Brahmapuri* or a living temple of God, and as cleanliness is a help to godliness, bodily purity is prescribed as necessary for purity of mind, or *sattva s'uddhi* which leads to spiritual concentration or *dhruva smṛti*.[3] *Vimōka*[4] is freedom from the circle of *kāma* and *krōdha*, and this mental detachment is essential to the meditation on Brahman.[5] *Abhyāsa*[6] follows from bodily purity and mental calmness and means the continuous practice of the presence of the indwelling Self, so that the mind may be Brahmanized[7] (*tadbhāva bhāvita*). The practice

[1] *S. B.*, I. i, i. p. 11 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 17.

[2] tallabdhir vivēkavimōkābhyāsa kriyā kalyāṇānavasādānuddharṣēbhyas sambhavān nirvacanācca I—*Bōdhāyanāvṛtti*.

[3] āhāra s'uddhau sattva s'uddhiḥ satvas'uddhau dhruvā smṛtih—*Chh. Up.*, VII. xxvi. 2.

[4] vimōkaḥ kāmānabhiṣvaṅgaḥ I—*Bodh. Vṛiti.*

[5] s'ānta upāsita I—*Chh. Up.*—III. xiv. 1.

[6] ārambhaṇasams'ilanam punaḥ punar abhyāsah I—*Bōdh. Vṛtti.*

[7] *B. G.* VIII, 6.

of such introversion does not free the *upāsaka* from his moral obligation to others and the next *sādhana* known as *kriyā* is the performance of the fivefold duties according to one's ability, as such moral obligations develop into a meditation on God.[1] The *mumukṣu* seeks to know Brahman by *Vēdic* recitation, sacrifice, benevolence and *tapas*.[2] *Kriyā* is the fivefold duty to the sub-human species, human society, the *guru*, the forefathers and the gods, as the right to life, well-being and education involves the corresponding obligation to the universe from which the aspirant derives his psycho-physical existence. Like the horse that requires grooming by the attendant before it is set for riding, *upāsanā* needs the performance of duties as a means of purification. While *kriyā* is overt action or duty, *kalyāṇa*[3] is the practice of virtue as the inner side of duty, and it consists of *satya* or truthfulness, *ārjava* or integrity, or purity of thought, word and deed, *dayā* or compassion, *dāna* or benevolence and *ahiṃsā* or non-violence.[4] The next *sādhana* is *anavasāda* or freedom from despair due to disappointment, remembrance of past sorrows, and horrible imaginings. *Anuddharṣa*, is the absence of exaltation and is a mean between the two extremes of excessive joy or *atisantōṣa* and absence of joy or *asantōṣa*. Good and evil actions are the result of *karma*, and *niṣkāma karma* is duty emptied of the subjective inclinations and objective ideas of utility. The meditation on Brahman finally frees the *jīva* from

[1] pañcamahāyajñādyanuṣṭhānam s'aktitaḥ kriyā I—*Bōdh Vṛtti*.
kriyāvānēṣa brahmavidām variṣṭhah I—*Muṇḍ. Up.*, III. i. iv.

[2] *Bṛ. Up.*, VI. iv. 22.

[3] satyārjavadayā dānāhimsānabhidhyāh kalyāṇāni.—*Bōdh. Vṛtti*.

[4] satyēna labhyaḥ I—*Muṇḍ. Up.*, III. i. 5.
yēṣām tapō brahmacaryam yēṣu satyam pratiṣṭhitam tēṣāmasau virajō-brahmalōkaḥ na yēṣu jiḥmam anṛtam na māyā cēti.—*Pranas Up.*, I. xv, 16.
dēsakālavaiguṇyāt s'okavastvādyanū-smṛtēs'ca tajjam dainyam abhāsvaratvam manasaḥ anavasādaḥ tadviparyayajā tuṣṭiḥ uddharṣāḥ—*Bōdh. Vṛtti*.

karma with its causal chains of *puṇya* resulting from good deeds and *pāpa*. The chief aim of the seven *sādhanas* is the practice of moral and spiritual discipline by the harmonious development of thought, feeling and will, which are partial expressions of the attributive consciousness of the meditating devotee.

Equipped with these disciplines, the *upāsaka* enters on the life of meditation, and cultivates the love of God. *Upāsanā* is a divine command like the performance of *dharma*, but while the *Vēdic* 'ought' is of the form 'Do your duty without caring for the consequences,' the *Vēdāntic* 'ought' is of the form 'Know the deity that is your self.' Of the three *Upaniṣadic* injunctions of *s'ravaṇa*, or hearing, *manana* or reflection and *nidhidhyāsana* or meditation, the first two naturally lead to the third, and *dhyāna* is the only divine command; *s'ravaṇa* and *manana* as the apperception of scriptural terms and the assimilation thereof by reflection have no value unless they deepen into *dhyāna*. It is by absolute devotion to God and not by *Vēdic* study, meritorious work or austerity that Brahman is realized.[1] The knowledge of Brahman is not academic or speculative, but is a spiritual intuition which transcends grammatical and logical thinking.[2] The term *vēdana* in the text: '*Brahmavid āpnōti param*' or one who knows Brahman attains the highest, connotes *dhyāna* or meditation which deepens into *upāsanā* or devotion or worship.[3] *Upāsanā* is the practice of the presence of the *ātman*, and admits of the three stages of firm meditation or *dhruvānusmṛti*, repetition or *asakṛdāvṛtti* and the orison of union or *dars'ana*

[1] nāyāmātmā pravacanēna labhyō
na mēdhayā na bahunā s'rutēna !—*Kath. Up.* I. ii. 22.

[2] *Taitt. Up.*, Ānanda Valli, I. i. 1.

[3] *S.B.*, I. i. 1. p. 9, and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p. 16.

samānākāratā. The first is not mere remembrance in the psychological sense, but a spiritual quest to gather together and get a glimpse of a prenatal experience of Brahman, as the *ātman* is a trailing cloud of glory, which has its home in the absolute. Every cognition of Brahman is a recognition of the inner self of the *upāsaka*, and is a recollection of the *a priori* idea of God as an archetype. *Dhyāna* is a continuous process of mental concentration, or *ēkāgracittatā*, on the nature and form of Brahman, which is practised daily till the moment of death or dissolution of the body.[1] *Dhyāna* as *upāsana* is a ceaseless remembrance of the Lord, which is likened to the uninterrupted flow of oil (*tailadhārāvat avicchinna smṛti-santāna-rūpa*).[2] It is the process of focussing the mind on Brahman in a proper environment. For this the aspirant is recommended to choose the proper place and time and to adopt the sitting posture, which is most conducive to *dhyāna*, as standing and walking involve effort, and lying down favours sleep and slothfulness. The eight stages of *yōga* are specially designed to draw the mind from its outgoing tendency and dispersal, to subdue its *vāsanās* and to centre it in *samādhi*. *Aṣṭāṅga Yōga* or the eightfold *yōga* is thus not only essential to the attainment of *Sāṅkhyan kaivalya* or the realization of the *ātman* but also to *Brahmōpāsanā*. As bondage is a descent to the world of *saṃsāra mukti* is the process of retracing the steps and returning to the spiritual home in God, and the whole scheme of *upāsanā* is governed by this central concept. *Upāsanā* deepens into *bhakti*, when recollection acquires by practice the clearness and distinctness of a direct perception

[1] s′ucau dēs′ē pratiṣṭhāpya sthiramāsanamātmanaḥ
nātyucchritaṃ nātinīcaṃ cēlājinakus′ottaram ||
tatraikāgram manah kṛtvā yatacittēndriyakriyaḥ
upavis′yāsanē yuñjyād yōgam ātmavis′uddhayē || —*B.G.*, VI. 11 and 12 and *S.B.*, IV. i. 1 to 12 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, pp. 715 to 721.

[2] *S.B.*, I. i. 1. p. 9 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII, p 14.

of the beatific form of *Paramātman* or the Supreme Self (*dars'ana samānākāra*). Imagination in the aesthetic sense is not merely creative imagination, but is a vision and faculty divine, which becomes as vivid as the soul sight of *Bhagavān*.

The exact meaning of *Brahmōpāsanā* as expounded by Rāmānuja can now be ascertained by distinguishing it from the concepts employed by *Dvaita* and *Advaita*. The *Dvaita Dars'ana* expounds the living faith in the infinite will of *Īs'vara* as contrasted with the infinitesimal nature of the *jīva* and the feeling of the absolute dependence of the *jīva* on His mercy. *Advaita* denies externality and otherness, and affirms the absolute identity of *jīva* and *Īs'vara* by eliminating distinction and difference. The meditation on Brahman as the Self or *s'arīrin* of the meditating devotee is opposed to externality as well as identity, and is deduced from the idea that *Īs'vara* is not only with us, but is in us as the Inner Ruler Immortal. The *Upaniṣad* in its classical exposition of Brahman as *antaryāmin* defines His nature, immanence and intimacy in the following terms: "He who, dwelling within the self, is different from the self, whom the self does not know, of whom the self is the body, who rules the self from within, He is thy Self, the Inner Ruler Immortal."[1] The *upāsaka* turns his vision inward, and thinks himself into the *antaryāmin* in the form: "I am indeed Thou, holy divinity, and Thou art my self."[2] In the ordinary judgment 'I am a man' the term connoting the *s'arīra* connotes the *s'arīrin*; likewise in the *Upaniṣadic* affirmation 'I am Thou,' the term connoting the *jīva* connotes ultimately Brahman, of which it is the body.

[1] ya ātmani tiṣṭhan ātmanōntaraḥ yam ātmā na vēda yasya ātmā s'arīram ya ātmānam antarō yamayati—*Bṛ. Up.*, V. vii, 22 (Mādhyandina reading)

[2] tvaṃ vā ahaṃ asmi bhagavō dēvatē aham vai tvam asi bhagavō dēvatē tad yōham sōsau yōsau sōham asmi.

Brahman is the source and sustenance of the *jīva*, and the latter exists for His satisfaction. *Brahmōpāsanā* is changed into *Brahmabhāva*, in which the finite self is infinitized and invested with the quality of Brahman. The converse, that the infinite should be finitized and given an anthropomorphic form, is not desirable.[1] Identification with the self should not be mistaken as identity with it, as the self is more than the *jīva* or *adhika* but is not *anya*,[2] *i.e.*, externally related to it. Vāsudēva is in all beings, but is not all beings. He is the life of our life, nearer to the self than it is to itself. This *upāsanā* promotes spiritual intimacy and the unitive consciousness.

There are thirty-two varieties of *Brahma Vidyā* described in the *Upaniṣads* for securing *mokṣa* and the *Sūtras*, as a systematic exposition of the *upāsanas*, bring to light their philosophic meaning and religious aim, and conclude that the only subject of enquiry in all the *Vidyās* is Brahman and not *prakṛti* or *jīva*, and their only object is the meditation on Brahman to attain *mukti*, and not the hedonistic enjoyment of worldly and other-worldly pleasures.[3] Among the chief *Vidyās* may be mentioned the *Bhūma Vidyā*, the *Sad Vidyā*, the *Antaryāmi Vidyā*, the *Antarāditya Vidyā*, the *Ānandamaya Vidyā*, the *Madhu Vidyā*, the *Dahara Vidyā*, the *Maitreyī Vidyā*, the *Nyāsa Vidyā* and the *Paryaṅka Vidyā*. The first defines the true nature of the *mumukṣu* as a seeker after Brahman or the *bhūman*, the true infinite. The next six *Vidyās* are mainly devoted to the metaphysical meditation on Brahman as the absolute that has *satyaṃ*, *jñānaṃ anantaṃ*, *ānanda*

[1] *S. B.*, IV. i. 4 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 719.

[2] adhikam tu bhēdanirdēs'āt.—*V.S.*, II. i. 22.
tadanaytvam ārambhaṇas'abdādibhyaḥ.—*V.S.* II. i. 15.

[3] *S.B.*, III. iii. 1 and *S. B. E.* XLVIII. p. 629.

and *amalatvaṃ*. In the *Antarāditya Vidyā* the Supreme Self is meditated upon as having a beauteous form of His own as *bhuvana sundara*. The next two *Vidyās* insist on *bhakti* and *prapatti* or self-surrender as the chief means of attaining Brahman, and the last *Vidyā* brings out the nature of *mukti* itself. The *Sad Vidyā* (*Chān. Up.*, VI. ii. 1) defines Brahman as the *sat* without a second and the true of the true, and this knowledge is determinate and not indeterminate. The apprehension of the being of Brahman cannot be separated from the comprehension of its nature or *guṇa*. The *Antaryāmi Vidyā* (*Bṛha. Up.*, V. vii. 4) explicitly equates the *sat* with the inner self of all beings and the super-subject or light of lights. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* further defines Brahman as the infinitely blissful. The *Akṣara Vīdyā* (*Muṇḍaka Up.*, I. i. 5-6) stresses the imperishable quality of the infinite. The *Dahara Vidyā* (*Chān. Up.*, VIII. i. 1) extols the infinite that seeks the interior of the heart of all beings as the infinitesimal to satisfy the devotional ends of the *upāsaka* or devotee. The *Paryaṅka Vidyā* of the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* visualizes by sense symbolism the transcendental realm of Brahman by attaining which everything else is attained. Each of the thirty-two *Vidyās* has its own specific character determined by the condition of its subject-matter or *prakriyā*, name or *nāmadhēya*, quality or *guṇa*, number or *saṅkhya* and repetition or *abhyāsa*.[1] Though the starting points and the procedure vary with the psychological temperament and training of the *adhikārin*, the ultimate goal is the attainment of Brahman. What is ascertained from all the *Vēdāntic* texts is the truth of the unity of the *Vidyās* on account of the non-difference of the result. As Brahman is the identical subject of all specific meditations, the contemplation of one essential quality comprises other

[1] S. *B.*, III. iii. 56 and S. *B. E.*, XLVIII. p. 679.

qualities as well.[1] Every essential quality of Brahman connotes other qualities of Brahman as well, owing to their *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēsaṇa* or organic inseparability and identity of content. Brahman is *saguṇa* with the metaphysical and moral perfections of *satyaṃ, jñānaṃ, anataṃ, amalatvaṃ* and *ānanda* as His differentia; and with the other *kalyāṇa* or auspicious *guṇas* derived from the essential qualities. Meditation on one quality of Brahman implies meditation on the other essential qualities. But each is complete in itself and has as its aim the attainment of Brahman. Owing to the differences in the psychological dispositions of the *adhikārin* and the ultimate unity of the result, the *Upaniṣads* provide option to each *upāsaka* to choose his own *vidyā*.[2]

In the building up of *Brahmōpāsanā* as an act of meditation as in all other actions, there are five component factors of which the chief is the will of *Īs'vara*. The *upāsaka* has to renounce the false views of materialism and monadism that the *dēha* or body as the *adhiṣṭāna* or support and the *ātman* as *kartā* or the doer are the real subjects of moral and religious practices and to realize that the supreme actor is *Paramātman*, the inner Ruler of all beings and *Paramas'ēṣi*. *Īs'vara* resides in the hearts of all beings after moulding their bodies out of matter and moving them to act according to their *guṇas*. As the righteous Ruler of the universe, He dispenses justice according to the *karma* of the individual without any caprice or cruelty. When the moral self becomes a *mumukṣu*, he recognizes the redemptive will of the *s'ēṣi*, and effaces his egoism in service. The *s'ēṣa* does not live unto himself but unto the *s'ēṣi*. The *jīva*, as materialist or sensualist, seeks the

[1] *S.B.*, III. iii. 13 and *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 638.
[2] *S.B.*, III. iii. 57 and *S.B.E.*, XLVIII. p. 681.

goods of life, but when he turns into a worshipper of God, he prays to the Giver of all good or Providence for the boons of life, and the sweets of life are then bestowed on him and the bitters are removed. The *jīva* then ascends to a higher stage when he prays to *Īs'vara* for the boon of *ātmāvalōkana* and then he intuits his *ātman*. The *mumukṣu* does not bargain with Providence for the pleasures of this life or of *Svarga*, nor does he seek the philosophic delight of self-knowledge or *kaivalya*, but meditates on Vāsudēva as his real self, and utilizes his spiritual freedom for the service of the *s'ēṣi*. The *karma yōgin* who does his duty in a disinterested way becomes a *jñāna yōgin*, who prefers self-knowledge to activity, and is transformed into a devotee, to whom *karma* is not *niṣkāma* or *akāma*, but is *kaiṅkarya* or consecrated service. The offerings to the *dēvas* like Agni, Indra and Vāyu are really dedicated to the *Dēvadēva* or the God of gods, who is their inner ruler; and therefore every *Vēdic* work is really the *Vēdāntic* worship of the supreme *s'ēṣi*. *Īs'vara*, the bestower of boons according to *karma*, transforms Himself into the redeemer or the bestower of *mōkṣa*. Thus the fruit of *upāsanā* is not earned by merit alone but by the redemptive mercy of the *rakṣaka* or saviour. The Lord accepts the flower of devotion more than the flower offerings of outer devotion and it is the eight-petalled flower of *ahiṃsā*, kindness, patience, truth, self-control, *tapas*, inwardness and *jñāna*.[1]

When *Brahmajijñāsā* or the philosophic enquiry into Brahman develops into *Brahmōpāsanā* or the ceaseless

[1] ahimsā prathamam puṣpam puṣpam indriyanigrahaḥ I
sarvabhūtadayā puṣpam kṣamā puṣpam vis'ēṣataḥ II
jñānam puṣpam tapaḥ puṣpam dhyānam puṣpam taṭhaiva ca I
satyam aṣṭhavidham puṣpam viṣṇōḥ prītikaram bhavēt II
—Vātsya Varadācārya's *Prapanna Pārijāta*, V. 29-29.

meditation on His nature, self-effort is transfigured into self-giving and the saving faith in the grace of God. *Mōkṣa*, as expounded in the philosophy of fruition, is not attained by mere moral and spiritual discipline. The real value of the practice of *niṣkāma karma* and ceaseless *dhyāna* lies in the recognition of the shortcomings of human endeavour and the reliance on divine grace as the only means to *mukti*. The *Advaitic* view that the knowledge of Brahman is not conditioned by the empirical distinction between endeavour and end, but is ever self-realized by the metaphysical *ātman* and that the seeking of divine grace is a concession to the theological faith of the phenomenal ego caught up in the sphere of causality, uproots the very foundations of the *Brahma Vidyā*, and the reality of the progression from the stage of *sādhana* or means to *sādhya* or end. If the idea of *mukti* as liberation through grace be the result of exoteric personification, the fact of *mumukṣutva* and the seeking of the grace of the *guru* would itself become illusory. But every school of *Vēdānta* insists on its practical aspect, namely, the necessity of the *guru-s'iṣya* relation and the absolute faith of the *s'iṣya* in attaining *mōkṣa* through *guru-prasāda* or the favour of the *guru*. Identity philosophers like Deussen, who admire the equational view of the *ātman* and Brahman as the philosophy of all time from which no deviation is possible, are constrained to admit that there is no satisfactory solution to the question of finding in the esoteric system what corresponds to the grace of God and that it is a deviation from the logical structure of *Advaita* to treat of the *sādhanas*, which refer to both the exoteric and the esoteric Brahman. Deussen is therefore inclined to think that Christianity completes the *Vēdāntic* view, whose fundamental want is the renewal of the will and freeing it from the realm of sin. That integration is, however, fully effected by Rāmānuja.

While *Advaitic* monism, according to him, demands identity by the destruction of *avidyā* or error, Christianity demands self-denial and love by the destruction of egoism and sin. Monism is as far removed from the religion of love, which defines salvation as the transformation of will, as Christianity is different from the *Advaitic* view, which defines *mukti* as the transformation of thought, and it is only *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, that enjoins the conquest of *avidyā* and *karma* by the scheme of *bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna* or knowledge developed into devotion or *bhakti*, which defines *mukti* as liberation through the saving grace of God. The *Upaniṣadic* statement is clear and conclusive. It is not by study or reflection that Brahman is realized. "Whom He chooses, unto him He reveals Himself."

Thus the term *vēdana* in the *Upaniṣad* text "*Brahma vid āpnōti paraṃ*" deepens into steady meditation or *upāsanā*, which is a recollection of our divine home, and when it becomes one-pointed and intense, it acquires the vividness of immediate presentation or *pratyakṣatā*. Representation then has the sensory vividness of a presentation or direct intuition. The archetypal idea of God is revived by means of frequent and intense association and reinstated by the dominant emotion of *bhakti*. Then the succession of the thoughts of God develops by interest and intensity into simultaneity, and what is mediate thought becomes immediate or felt. What is *smṛti-santāna-rūpa* or of the nature of a stream of remembrances changes into *dars'ana samānākāra* or the likeness of direct intuition. When the idea of God as *s'ēṣī* is clear and distinct and the religious emotion is disciplined, *upāsanā* has its fruition in *bhakti*.

Bhakti is meditation on Brahman touched with love or *prīti*. It is absolute devotion to *Bhagavān* as the life of our

life, and is love for love's sake. The true *bhakta* is the true *jñānī*, as he knows that *Bhagavān* alone is the source and satisfaction of life.[1] So he lives and has his being in the divine love. The Lord of love seeks the *jñānī* and sees him as His very life and self.[2] Thus the *jīva* who, as the *prakāra* of Brahman, sees the *prakārin*, is now sought by Brahman and loved as His *prakārin*. The true *jñānī* does not meditate on himself or do *svasvarūpa anusandhāna*. He meditates on the Self of his self and thus transforms himself into a *bhakta*, who loves *Bhagavān* as his very life and rejects *mukti* itself, if it is devoid of divine life. To him the *Muktipāda* of the *Sūtras* is transfigured into a *Bhaktipāda*. The essentials of *bhakti* are thus constituted by the ideas of absoluteness, reciprocity and unconditionality. The supreme value of *bhakti* is the accessibility of the Lord to His *bhakta* and adaptability to his devotional needs. Brahman, the transcendental one without a second, is overpowered by His *dayā* or compassion and enters into the heart of humanity or *jīva-lōka* and incarnates in any form to satisfy the needs of love and *bhakti*. In the light of this sacred truth or *rahasya*, it is untenable to say that the philosophic *upāsanas* of the *Upaniṣad* have been erroneously adopted by Rāmānuja to the theistic needs of the *Gītā* and the emotional requirements of the *Pāñcarātra*, and that Brahman in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* becomes *Bhagavān* or the anthropomorphic highest and the *avatāra* or *uttama puruṣa* or pattern of human evolution. The ideas of *antaryāmin* and *avatāra* are not the phenomenalized forms of Brahman, but are the manifestation of divine love. The true joy of *bhakti* is in the building up by the *jīva* of a *sōpāna* or ladder from the earth to *Paramapada* or the eternal abode and the descent of

[1] *B. G.* VII. 19.
[2] *B. G.*, VII. 17 and 18.

Brahman from *Paramapada* to *Kṣīrābdhi* and from *Kṣīrābdhi* to the realms of immanence and incarnation. Love ignores inequality of status and function. While *Īs'vara* tries to shed His *Īs'varatva* to become one with the *jīva*, the beloved, the *bhakta* sheds his *avidyā* and *karma* and communes with the Lord. *Bhakti* is not aware of the barriers of distance and the fear arising from the sinfulness of sin contrasted with the holiness of the Holy. *Bhakti* is for the sake of *bhakti* and has its fruition in absolute self-surrender to *Bhagavān* as the *upāya* or means and the *upēya* or end. The *Gītā*, as the crown of *Upaniṣadic* teaching, affords spiritual insight into the nature of Brahman or *Bhagavān* as S'rī Kṛṣṇa, who is the supreme *tattva* of truth, the real *hita* or means and the *puruṣārtha* or aim of human effort. According to the *Gītārtha Saṅgraha* of Yāmunācārya the *Gītā* consists of three *ṣaṭkas* or sections of six chapters each, which throw light on the path from sensuality to spirituality and from spirituality to *bhakti*. The first *ṣaṭka* defines the nature of *Karma Yōga* and *Jñāna Yōga* as the limbs of *ātmāvalōkana* or intuition of the *ātman* as a means to *Bhakti Yōgā*; the second extols *bhakti* as the supreme means to *mukti*, and the last sums up the whole truth, and insists on absolute self-surrender to the Lord as the only way of redemption. The second chapter expounds the eternity of the *ātman* and the ethics of *niṣkāma karma* or disinterested action, and thus correlates *Saṅkhyan* knowledge and *yōgic* conduct. The third chapter defines *niṣkāma karma* negatively as the result of the interaction of the *guṇas* and positively as consecrated service to *Bhagavān*. The fourth reveals the *jñāna* aspect of *karma* and the true nature of *avatāra* or incarnation. The fifth stress the ease and expeditiousness of *Karma Yōga* and the meaning of *samadars'ana*; the sixth chapter explains the nature of *ātmāvalōkana* as the

fulfilment of the two *Yōgas*. The middle *ṣaṭka* explains and extols the nature of *Bhagavān* as the Supreme Self, and *Bhakti Yōga* as the most efficacious means of knowing Him and attaining *mukti*. The seventh chapter classifies *bhaktas* into four types, namely, *ārta*, *jijñāsu*, *ais'varyārthī* and *jñānī* or the man in affliction, the man who seeks self-knowledge, the man who seeks worldly goods and the wise man, and assigns the highest place to the *jñānī* who seeks God alone as his *ātman* and who is sought by God as His very life. The eighth chapter analyses the motives and ends of the different seekers of God. The ninth brings to light the transcendental character of the *avatāras* and the essentials of *bhakti*. The tenth expatiates on the infinity of perfections or *kalyāṇa guṇas* of Brahman with a view to awaken the true devotional consciousness of the *bhakta*. The eleventh describes with epic sublimity the cosmic glory or *vibhūti* of *Bhagavān* as experienced by Arjuna who was given the 'vision and faculty divine.' The twelfth chapter states the supreme value of *bhakti*, and indicates the diverse ways of practising it according to the psychological requirements of the *adhikārī*. The last *ṣaṭka* sums up the central aim of the *Gīta* and rounds off with the truth that absolute self-surrender is the one and only way to redemption. The thirteenth chapter distinguishes between the body as *kṣētra* or field and the *ātman* as *kṣētrajña* or the dweller in the field, and points out the means of freeing oneself from the bondage of embodiment or *saṃsāra*. The fourteenth traces the cause of bondage to the interaction of the three *guṇas* with a view to securing the disillusionment of the *ātman*. The fifteenth chapter points to *Puruṣōttama* as higher than the highest of the *jīvas*, known as the *akṣara* or freed self. The sixteenth defines the divine type of the *jīva* as the supreme seeker after *Bhagavān* and the seventeenth analyses the

psychological distinctions of conduct as determined by the *guṇas* with a view to defining duty as a divine command. The last chapter insists on *s'araṇāgati* or surrender to the Lord as the supreme means of *mōkṣa*.

When meditation or *upāsanā* as a divine command deepens into innate and intense love or *prēmā*, *bhakti* becomes its own end marked by fidelity and fervour and is called *pāramaikāntya*. The building up of *bhakti* by *Karma Yōga* and *Jñāna Yōga* develops into *paramaikānta prīti* or definitely determined love to *Bhagavān* as the *ādhāra*, *niyantā* and *ṣēṣī*. There is no other *Bhagavān* than *Bhagavān*. The *paramaikāntin* knows, feels and acts with the *s'āstraic* conviction that *Bhagavān* is both the means and the end, the *prāpaka* and the *prāpya*. As the *ādhēya*, the *bhakta* realizes his inseparability from *Paramātman* like the radiance of the sun (the *prabhā* of *Bhāskara*) and lives only in the love of God. He feels that Brahman is absolute bliss and renounces the pleasures of *ais'varya* or wealth and the happiness of *kaivalya* and other egoistic satisfaction, and realizes that he exists for the satisfaction of the *s'ēṣī*. *Bhakti* increases *pari passu* with the intensity of self-renouncement or *vairāgya*. As *s'ēṣa* he recognizes the supreme truth, namely, 'I am not He, but am eternally His *dāsa*,' not *sōham* but *dāsōham*, and effaces himself in the service of the *s'ēṣī*. Every *karma* by thought, word and deed is transfigured into *kaiṅkarya* or worship of *Bhagavān*, as He is Himself the ultimate doer and the deed. Service to the *s'ēṣī* is entirely different from *dāsya* in the ordinary sense. To attribute it to the slave mentality of the creature awe-struck by the dictatorial fiat of the capricious Lord is the result of deep-rooted prejudice and misunderstanding of the function of the will. The will of *Bhagavān* as *niy antā* is

the will to love and be ruled by love and the will of the *s'ēṣa* consists in its response to the divine call and attunement with the redeeming purpose by developing the attitude of service to God as the only motive of conduct and as its sole end. The rewards and rebuffs of life arise from self-alienation from the *s'eṣī*, and the *paramaikāntin* or absolute and perfect devotee knows that the real evil is not suffering but the sin of self-estrangement from the *s'arīrin*. Thus the philosophic knowledge of Brahman as *ādhāra* and the *jīva* as *ādhēya* has its fruition in the religious relation of *s'ēṣī* and *s'ēṣa* or *svāmin* and *dāsa*. Such *dāsyatva* or service is not a task implying a must or an ought but is a spiritual experience which is *sui generis*, and it connotes *pāratantrya* or dependence on the Lord and *pārārthya* or existence for the Lord. It is not even induced by the goodness of God but is the true relation of the self to God who is necessarily good, not *guṇairdāsya* but *svarūpa dāsya*. The self enters the service of the Lord not owing to the attraction of His qualities but owing to its own real nature. The *bhakta* recognizes *Bhagavān* as his only Lord and serves His will, as such service is the only goal of religious experience and constitutes the highest joy of life or *rasa*. It is the self that primarily experiences *ānanda* or bliss, and not its body or *s'arīra*, and all the delights of life belong not to the *jīva* but to the *jīva-s'arīrin* or the Supreme Self who lives within the self. While the mood of *pāratantrya* is aroused by our unworthiness, that of *pārārthya* is unconditioned self-surrender to the will of God, the only *s'ēṣī*. The *paramaikāntin* thus lives and has his being in *bhakti*, and not only has *ais'varya* or *kaivalya* no charms for him, but even *mukti* has no value, if it were emptied of *bhakti*. *Saṃsāra* with uninterrupted *bhakti* has itself the value of *apavarga* or *mōkṣa* and Vēdānta Dēs'ika's

preference of Varada-*bhakti* [1] here and now to the bliss of *Vaikuṇṭha* that is beyond is a typical *Vaiṣṇavite* experience, which has practically more value than *jīvanmukti*. Another feature of *paramaikāntya* is the intense love of *Bhagavān* to the *bhakta* whom He regards as His *prakārin* or *s'arīrin*.[2] He is extolled as the *mahātmā* who intuits Him everywhere as Vāsudēva and is sustained by Him as his *ādhāra* and *s'ēṣī*. *Bhakti* as service to God is completed or consummated only in the ideal of service to godly persons and to all *jīvas* and is the supreme end of *pāramaikāntya*.

The *jñānī* meditates on Brahman as his self and cultivates exclusive devotion to Him or *ēkabhakti* and is the true *bhakta*, as his devotion is controlled by the single idea of attaining *mukti*. When *Bhakti Yōga* thus becomes a means to *mōkṣa*, it is called *parabhakti*. This *bhakti* is awakened only by *s'āstraic* knowledge purified by *karma* and sanctified by *jñāna*, and when it develops into a thirst for the direct intuition of *Bhagavān* it is called *parajñāna*. Then the view of God becomes a vision of God, but it is still not perfect ; love leads to a continuous and deep longing for God and unquenchable spiritual thirst ; and then *parabhakti* becomes *parama bhakti*.[3] The *bhakta* at this stage is not satisfied by mere visions, voices and auditions which are only intimations of immortality, but eagerly and restlessly seeks the stability of eternal bliss. The *bhakta* longs to see the beauteous form of *Bhagavān* with the eye of the soul and hear the music of love with the spiritual ear. While the philosopher in him cogitates on Brahman as

[1] Vēdānta Dēs'ika : *Varadarāja Pañcās'at*, 49.

[2] . . . . . jñānavān mām prapadyatē |
Vāsudēvas sarvamiti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ || *B. G.*, VII. 19.
jñānitvātmaiva mē matam |.—*B. G.*, VII. 18.

[3] Vēdānta Dēs'ika : *Rahasyatraya Sāra*, Ch. IX.

the ultimate unity of all existing things, the *bhakta* hungers for union and communion with the Self who has established His home in the interior of his heart. He does not desire the gifts of God like *ais'varya* and *kaivalya* but seeks the Giver Himself. By renouncing his egoism, he seeks to attain Brahman, who is all in all. When the *bhakta* seeks God, God also seeks him and the lover and the beloved are finally united in the realm of *mukti*.

In his well-known work, the *Paramapada Sōpāna*, Vēdānta Dēs'ika indicates the nine stages in the path to perfection, of which the first five, *viz.*, *vivēka*, *nirvēda*, *virakti*, *bhītībhāva* and *upāya*, constitute the means. While the *jīva* continuously suffers from the sorrows of *saṃsāra* arising from the cycle of *karma*, *avidyā*, *vāsanā*, *ruci* and *prakṛti-saṃbandha* and is bewildered by the confusion of *ajñāna* or ignorance, *saṃs'aya* or doubt, and *viparyaya* or wrong notion, the Lord of Love, ever on the watch for an occasion to turn the *jīva* from his career of sin and redeem him from the error of his ways, finds a suitable opportunity and comes to him as the *Brahma guru*. The *mumukṣu* is blessed with *vivēka* and acquires a clear and distinct knowledge of the difference between *cit*, *acit* and *Īs'vara* in terms of *s'ēsī* and *s'ēṣa* and of His attributes of *jñātṛtva*, *kartṛtva* and *bhōktṛtva* as depending on and derived from the Supreme Self as *parama s'ēṣī*. Reflecting on the wickedness and vanity of earthly life, the *mumukṣu* becomes sick-minded and is seized with remorse. Instead of serving the *s'ēṣī* as *Bhagavat kiṅkara* he has become the slave of sensibility and sin as *indriya kiṅkara*, and this knowledge brings on the mood of repentance. *Vivēka* and *nirvēda* lead to *virakti*. The *mumukṣu* realizes his nature as an *ātman* different from the

dēha and feels the hazards and hardships of *saṁsāra*, to which he is exposed by his *rāga* and *dvēṣa*, and renounces the pleasures of sense and sensibility and even the happiness of *Svarga*. If *pāpa* is an iron chain of *karma* binding the *jīva* to *saṃsāra*, *puṇya* is but a golden chain leading to *Svarga* where the *jīva* serves the *dēvas* for a time like a beast of burden and is finally hurled again into the world of adventure. The *mumukṣu*, therefore, rejects and renounces the values of earthly and heavenly life, and discrimination is thus followed by remorse and dissociation from bodily feelings. In the fourth stage, the dread of the infinite chain of *karma* and of the sinfulness of ancient sin becomes a marked feature of the spiritual struggle. While *vivēka* arrests *ātmāpahāra* or the stealing of the *ātman* by the senses and the loss of the self, *nirvēda* is the moral feeling that sin should be avoided owing to its fatal effect (*niṣiddha nivṛtti*) and *virakti* destroys sensuality. In the *bhīti parva*, the author traces the ultimate cause of ignorance and sin and their self-multiplying power which cannot be destroyed by expiation or retribution, and brings home to the mind of the *mumukṣu* the hideousness and horrors of sin and the miseries of metempsychosis and *saṃsāra* familiarly known as the *tāpatraya* or threefold torment. The classic portrayal by Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār of the tyranny of *karma* and the tragedy of human sorrows by the analogies of the storm-tossed ship, the dilemma of the ant caught between the two burning ends of a faggot, the pack of animals on an island enveloped by rising floods and the man dwelling with cobras in the house is unsurpassed in religious literature. This mood of sick-mindedness is only a spur to spiritual effort and therefore a passing phase in religious evolution, and the *mumukṣu* not only seeks freedom from *avidyā-karma*, but, as a *bhakta*, seeks reunion with the Lord. The next stage of *Bhakti*

Yōga explains the rationale of *bhakti* and defines it as the continuous and loving meditation on *Bhagavān* with the vividness of a direct intuition. *Bhakti* is not merely the act of pleasing God by external worship but is also an inner spiritual attitude enriched by the eight virtues or *ātma guṇas*. They consist of *śauca* or purity, *kṣānti* or patience, *anasūyā* or absence of jealousy, *anāyāsa* or absence of depression, *aspṛhā* or absence of covetousness, *akārpaṇya* or strength of mind, *maṅgaḷa* or good deeds, kind words and noble thoughts and *sarva bhūtēṣu dayā* or love to all beings. When *bhakti* deepens into *prēma bhakti* or *ananya bhakti* or absolute devotion, it ceases to be an injunction and becomes a deep yearning for God. God is also seized with soul-hunger and yearns for communion with the *jīva*. When scriptural faith in God ceases to be of the bargaining type and is marked by fidelity and fervour, the soul-hunger for God becomes irrepressible and the two are united together for ever in love.

CHAPTER XVI

PRAPATTI

THE building up of *bhakti* is an elaborate process of synthesis, which unites the different mental elements of conation or *karma*, cognition or *jñāna*, and feeling or *bhōga* and brings them into a higher synthesis of religious aspiration, *bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna* or the knowledge which has become *bhakti*. The devotional process pulsates with the triple rhythm of *Karma Yōga*, *Jñāna Yōga* and *Bhakti Yōga* ; and the symmetry of the triadic process set forth in *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, by which the *ātman* ascends to the absolute, remains unsurpassed in the philosophy of religion. It portrays the return of the *jīva* to its home in Brahman, by which the sense of self-alienation is overcome. *Karma Yōga* presupposes the *s'āstraic* knowledge of the distinction between the *ātman* and *Paramātman*, and it consists in the performance of duty as a divine command without caring for the fruits of *karma* and in acquiring moral autonomy. *Jñāna Yōga* helps in the process of self-realization or *ātmāvalōkana* through self-renunciation. The *ātman* is experienced as a spiritual entity different from the natural self arising from the mistaken identity of the *jīva* with the *dēha* or body, and the true *ahaṃ* 'I' lives by the death of the false *ahankāra* or egoism. The knowledge of the *ātman* leads to God-consciousness or *bhakti*. In *Bhakti Yōga* the theoretical

knowledge of *Bhagavān* develops into *upāsanā* or meditation on the Lord including His *svarūpa*, *rūpa* and *guṇa*. *Upāsanā* is *dhruvā smṛti* or steady thought of God, which gains in intensity by *āvṛtti* or ceaseless practice till the end is attained. *Smṛti* or thought thereby acquires the glow and vividness of *darsana* or vision. Then *karma* becomes *kaiṅkarya* or service and worship of God. *Jñāna*, which, in its early stages, is *buddhi* or *vivēka* (discrimination), develops into *ātmajñāna* or knowledge of the self and *Brahmajñāna* or knowledge of God; and *bhakti* ends in *kaiṅkarya*; intellectual love and remembrance of God are changed into the realization of God. When *bhakti* is no longer a prayer to, and praise of, *Bhagavān* for the gain of *aisvarya* or for the goal of *kaivalya*, but is love for love's sake, the *bhakta* becomes a *paramaikāntin*.

The love of God becomes, in course of time, a thirst for communion and *parabhakti* deepens into *parajñāna*; and *parajñāna* results in *paramabhakti* or supreme devotion and becomes irresistible. The progression in *bhakti* corresponds to the awakening of divine grace. Brahman as *Īsvara* becomes a redeemer and finally the Lord of Love. *Bhakti* has its consummation in *mukti* and the attainment of the eternal bliss of Brahman, The philosophy of *bhakti* is thus a ladder of love from earth to heaven and the philosophy of divine grace, one from heaven to earth; and the sublimity of the whole design is only matched by its symmetry. It is however too sublime for the ordinary man to follow. The four main requirements or *adhikāra* for *Bhakti Yōga* are a clear philosophic knowledge of the realms of *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*, the will rigorously to undergo the discipline in due order, the *sāstraic* qualification of birth as an essential aid to *bhakti* and the *satvic* patience to endure the ills of *prārabdha karma* till it is

exhausted or expiated. The whole design collapses even if a single condition in the long vista of its evolution is not fulfilled or a false step is taken. The path of *bhakti* finally leads to the world of *Bhagavān*, but is strewn with infinite pitfalls and setbacks. It is likened to a bridge of hair over a river of fire, and the *jīva*, with its load of *avidyā* and proneness to evil, has, in this *Kali* age of confusion, very little chance of reaching the goal of liberation. But *s'āstra*, in its infinite tenderness for erring and weak-kneed humanity, guarantees God to all *jīvas* irrespective of their status and station in life. As demonstrated by Vēdānta Dēs'ika, the chief apostle of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, after Rāmānuja, it has provided for the weak and infirm an alternative path to *mukti* known as *prapatti*.

The misconception that *Prapatti Yōga* is an alien graft on *Vēdānta* and not an inner growth is removed by an appeal to *s'āstra* and *s'āstraic* experience. The *Upaniṣad* prescribes for the *mumukṣu*, *prapatti* and *bhakti* which lead to *Brahma prasādā* or the grace of God, the pre-requisite for *mukti*. The *Gītā*, as the essence of *Upaniṣadic* wisdom, summons the whole world of *jīvas* that are heavily laden with sin to renounce their duties and take refuge at the feet of the universal saviour and offers *mukti* to all of them. In the systematic exposition of the *Vidyās*, the *Vēdānta Sūtrās*, according to the *S'rutaprakās'ikā*, the classic gloss on the *S'rī Bhāṣya*, insist on the unity of all *Brahma Vidyās*, and it is the intention of the *Sūtrakāra* to include the *Nyāsa Vidyā* or *Prapatti Yōga* among the important means to *mōkṣa*. The spiritual experience of the Tamil seers or *Āḷvārs* is epitomized [*Tiruvaimoḷi*, VI. x. 10] in the *nyāsa* of Nammāḷvār who is extolled as the super-*prapanna* of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism*. *Bhakti Yōga* is a steep path to *mukti* hedged in by the exacting

conditions of *Karma Yōga* and *Jñāna Yōga*, and it includes the wearisome disciplines of *aṣṭāṅga yōga*, and is a gradual progression in religious consciousness. Although *bhakti* is a desirable means to *mukti*, it is not easily practised in this *Kali Yuga* owing to its arduousness. But *prapatti* preserves the essentials of *bhakti*, dispenses with its predisposing causes or conditions, which are only contingent, and omits the non-essentials like the need for ceaseless practice. It is thus a direct and independent (*advāraka*) means to *mōkṣa*. The only requisite for *prapatti* is the change of heart or contrition on the part of the *mumukṣu* and his absolute confidence in the saving grace of the *rakṣaka*. It is not the possession of merit that is the operative cause of grace or *dayā*, but the sense of one's unworthiness and the sinfulness of sin. The Lord is the only way and goal to the *mumukṣu* and *prapatti* is the act of self-surrender to His grace. It is not a juristic conception of debit and credit account between the *jīva* as the doer of *karma* and *Īśvara* as the giver of boons, nor is it an undeserved favour of the Lord. It implies an intimate relation between the self-gift of the *mumukṣu* and the flow of divine mercy or *dayā*. Redemption is a justification by faith or *mahāviśvāsa* and not by works, and it is not won by merit as the result of a continuous process. It is the essence of the religion of *prapatti* that the Lord of grace seeks the *prapanna* and draws him to Himself. The act has a summary effect, as it destroys even *prārabdha karma* or *karma* that has begun to operate. The supreme merit of *prapatti* lies in the universality of its appeal to all castes and classes, the guarantee of salvation to all *jīvas* who cannot follow the precipitous and arduous path of *bhakti*, its intrinsic and independent value as means or *upāya* and the naturalness and ease in securing immediate effect (*sarvādhikāratva*, *sukaratā*, *sakṛtkartavyatā* and *avilaṃba phalatva*).

The inner meaning and value of *prapatti* is revealed by Piḷḷai Lōkācārya and Vēdānta Dēs'ika in their exposition of the three sacred truths or *rahasya traya* which contain the essentials of *Vēdānta* in terms of *tattva*, *hita* and *puruṣārtha*. They are known as *mūla mantra*, *dvaya* and *carama s'lōka* ; the first states them in a nutshell, the second makes the meaning more explicit and the third elaborates it still further. The *praṇava* in the *mūla mantra* sums up wisdom in the sacred sound and is the supreme *mantra* of the *Nyāsa Vidyā*.[1] The letter अ or *akāra* connotes *Paramātman* as the source of all things, ideas and words, the twenty-sixth *tattva* which is the truth of all things and also the alpha and omega of language ; *ukāra* or the letter उ denotes *S'rī* in the dual sense of *S'riyaḥpati* ; *makāra* or the letter म् refers to the *jīva* who is thus declared to be the *ādhēya* or supported and the *sēṣa* or dependent of *S'riyaḥpati*. The *Nyāsa Vidyā* condemns self-conceit and self-love and affirms the truth of *pāratantryam* or the soul's utter dependence on God, and it signifies the self-oblation of the *jīva* to *Paramātman* who is its self. The *mūla mantra* is an expansion of the *praṇava*, and it makes the meaning more clear by equating Brahman with Nārāyaṇa and explaining the means to *mōkṣa* as *ātmanivēdana* or self-gift to the *s'ēṣī*. The term Nārāyaṇa in the *mantra* is *yōgarūḍha*, *i.e.*, significant and singular. He is the one without a second, not in the mathematical but in the metaphysical sense. As *akāra* and Nārāyaṇa, *Paramātman* is immanent in all beings as their life without losing His transcendental eminence and is the *sarva rakṣaka* that redeems all *jīvas* from their evil career. He is the ground of all existence and the giver of all

[1] praṇavō dhanus'sarōhyātmā brahma tallakṣyamucyatē I
apramattēna vēddhavyam s'aravat tanmayō bhavēt II.—*Muṇḍ Up*. II. ii. 4.
Om ityātmānam yuñjita I—*Taitt. Up*., *Narayan*, 79.

good. *Nara* is the *makāra* of *praṇava* and it refers to the universe of *cit* and *acit* of which Nārāyaṇa is the pervading Self. Nārāyaṇa is immanent in the *nara* and is also the goal or *ayana* of the *nara*. The middle word *namaḥ* of the *mantra* prescribes the abandonment of all egoism (*ahaṅkāra*) or self-naughting, and *s'araṇāgati* as the chief *hita* or *upāya*, and it also connotes the truth that God is the only goal of life. Thus the *mūla mantra* as a whole and in each of its parts proclaims that Nārāyaṇa alone is the source of all existence, the goal of all experience and the means of realizing that goal.[1] He is the saviour of all *jīvas* and all actions should be dedicated to the *s'ēṣī* who is the real Actor, and the highest offering is self-gift to the *s'ēṣī* to whom the self belongs by divine right.

The *mumukṣu* as a philosopher-devotee trains his intellect in all its eight aspects and offers the eight flowers of *bhakti* to *Bhagavān*. *Buddhi* is disciplined in eight ways which are *grahaṇa* or quick grasp of *Vēdāntic* truth, *dhāraṇa* or retention in the mind, *smaraṇa* or reproduction, *pratipādana* or lucid exposition to others, *ūha* or inferring the unknown from the known, *apōha* or apperception and application in new contexts, *vijñāna* or discrimination and *tattvajñāna* or the knowledge of first principles. The eight flowers of devotion to be offered at the feet of the Lord are the avoidance of harm to others or *ahiṃsā*, sovereignty over the senses or *indriya nigraha*, benevolence to all beings or *sarvabhūta dayā*, forgiveness or *kṣamā*, knowledge or *jñāna*, austerity or *tapas*, meditation or *dhyāna* and truthfulness or *satya*.[2]

[1] svaprāptēs svayamēva sādhanatayā jōghuṣyamānaḥ—Vēdānta Dēs'ika, *Rahasyatraya Sāra*, Ch. XXIII.

[2] S'rī Vātsya Varadācārya's *Prapanna Pārijāta*, V. 28-29.

Dvaya has kingly pre-eminence over other *mantras*, as it brings out the full implications of the supreme *tattva* or truth, as S'rīman Nārāyaṇa or Nārāyaṇa and S'rī. The first half initiates the seeker after God into the *rahasya* that Nārāyaṇa is not only the source and centre of the universe (*Jagatpati*), but it is also the Lord of Love or *S'riyaḥpati* and that *S'rī* resides in the heart of Nārāyaṇa to redeem the sinning sundered self from its sinfulness. The dual form of the Godhead typifies the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God designed to inspire the hope of universal salvation. The *jīva*, realizing his utter unworthiness, casts himself on the mercy of the Lord which is spontaneously showered on him. *Prapatti* as an act or attitude of self-surrender presupposes the shedding of egoism and the sense of responsibility and also implies responsiveness to the operation of grace. The second part deals with *prāpti* and the *prapanna* realizes that his self-feeling is swept away by the downpour of mercy and he leads a dedicated life, and eats, drinks and lives by religion. What is implicit in the *Svetās'vatara Upaniṣad* [1] and *Katha S'ruti* is elaborated in the *Gadya* of Rāmānuja and the *Rahasyatraya Sāra* of Vēdānta Dēs'ika and is exemplified in the *s'araṇāgati* of Nammāḷvār,[2] the super-*prapanna* of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* and of Yāmunācārya[3]. The *Vēdāntic* truth that Brahman exists to Brahmanize the *jīva* is illumined by the *Pāñcarātra* idea of Vāsudēva and Nārāyaṇa as ruler and *rakṣaka* and is further confirmed by the assurance contained in the *dvaya mantra* and the Tamil *Prabandha* that divine justice is not only tempered by *dayā* or compassion but is dominated by it. The word *S'rī* has six meanings in the

[1] mumukṣur vai s'araṇam aham prapadyē.—*Sv. Up.*, VI, 18.
[2] *Tiruvoimoli*, VI. x. 10.
[3] na dharma niṣṭhōsmi na cātmavēdi
na bhaktimān tvaccaraṇāravindē I
akiñcanōnanyagati's' s'araṇya
tvatpādamūlam s'araṇam prapadyē I I *Stōtraratnam*, 21.

religion of redemption, of which the most relevant is the idea of her converting *Īs'vara* as ruler into *s'araṇya* or saviour by her timely intercession and mediation on behalf of the repentant sinner. In the epic conflict between the ideas of retribution and forgiveness, law rules over love in the moral realm, and the two are balanced in ethical religion; but in the sphere of the religion of redemption, *dayā* or mercy dominates over *daṇḍadharatva* or retributive justice and transforms the love of law into the law of love. *S'rī* is *svāminī* to the *jīva* and as *puruṣakāra* or mediator, she mediates on behalf of the sinner and is the eternal link of love between the Ruler and the transgressor, transforming the former into the Saviour and the latter into the penitent seeker after pardon. The words *prapadyē* and *namaḥ* in the *dvaya mantra* insist on the need for renouncing egoism (*svarūpa samarpaṇa*) and the sense of self-responsibility (*bhara samarpaṇa*) on the ground that the Lord and S'rī are *upāya* and *upēya* or the endeavour and the end and for performing *kaiṅkarya* for the satisfaction of the *s'ēṣī*. The *s'araṇāgati* of Nammāḷvār in the *Tiruvāimoḷi* (VI. x. 10) is the pattern of *prapatti* set by a super-*prapanna* as it eminently satisfies the requirements of the *Upaniṣad* and the *Gītā*. It reveals the organic relation between the *s'araṇya* or Saviour and the *s'araṇāgata* or the soul that seeks refuge in Him in terms of *s'araṇāgati*. Lakṣmī resides for ever as and in the heart of *Īs'vara* as *anapāyinī* or inseparably united and is indistinguishable from Him like the fragrance from the flower. The two, *Īs'vara* and *S'rī*, are one ontologically, but different functionally owing to the redemptive needs of the *jīva*. In the interests of redemption, Lakṣmī becomes the *Īs'varī* of *Īs'vara* and changes His law of *karma* into the rule of *kṛpā*. *Īs'vara* overpowered by *dayā* or compassion and *vātsalya* or

affection renounces His *paratva* or supreme greatness and incarnates as S'rinivāsa of unsurpassable beauty and love. He is the only *s'araṇya* or refuge and strength of the *jīva*; *Āḷvār* as *s'araṇāgata* seeks refuge at His feet with the intercession of Lakṣmī as *puruṣakāra* or mediator, and *s'araṇāgati* or *prapatti* is self-surrender at the feet of S'rīnivāsa with the conviction that He is the only *upāya* and *upēya*.

The religion of *s'araṇāgati* is enshrined in the *Carama S'loka* or final teaching of the Lord in the *Gītōpaniṣad* and the knowledge of this supreme secret or *rahasyatama* is intended to remove the sorrows of life and afford the stability of salvation. In the philosophy of religion, Brahman is the infinite beyond the world, the Holy that exacts reverence and the Immanent that brings out mystic intimacy. The conception of the same Brahman as the Redeemer brings to light the qualities of *saulabhya*, *vātsalya* and *kāruṇya* which are indispensable in a redeemer. S'rī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of *dayā*, as the *sārathi* or charioteer of Arjuna, the *rathī*, the typical son of man or Nara, with all the frailties of humanity, drives home the gospel of *mukti* as a song of love to all who suffer from the burden of sin and are unable to overcome it by their own effort. "Renounce all *dharmas* and take refuge in me; I shall release you from all sins. Grieve not." Every *karma* presupposes five factors of which the real operative cause is the redemptive will of God working through the freedom of the *jīva*. It is this truth that furnishes the motive and meaning to the imperative of *niṣkāma karma*: 'Do your *karma*;' of *upāsanā*, 'Meditate on Brahman' and of the *Prapatti Yōga* 'Renounce all *dharmas* and take refuge in me.' The moral law, the *Upaniṣadic* injunction and the command of the *rakṣaka* derive their authority from the supreme truth that the

kartā is an instrument of *Īs'vara.* The divine imperative 'Renounce *dharma* and take refuge in me' (*parityajya* and *vraja*) implies the freedom of the *jīva* to follow it. The freedom of the self is *Is'varādhīna* or dependent on *Īs'vara* and it is fulfilled only when it is attuned to the will of the *rakṣaka.* Even the will to serve the Lord by self-effacement is only the gift of His grace. *Tyāga* or renunciation connotes the abandonment not of *karma* and spiritual endeavour but only of the sense of egoism. *Karma sannyāsa* as the literal giving up of all one's duties would destroy the moral foundations of service and *upāya nirāsa* might result in moral and social irresponsibility. The essential condition of *nyāsa* is not the abandonment of duty but the renunciation of the egoistic motive. The consummation of *karma* is *kaiṅkarya* or service consecrated to the *s'araṇya.* The Lord is ultimately both the endeavour and the end, the *prāpya* and the *prāpaka,* the *upāya* and the *upēya.* The *sādhyōpāya* is the act of self-surrender (*s'araṇam vraja*) to the will of the *rakṣaka* who is the inner ruler and the *siddhōpāya* is the Lord Himself (*māṃ ēkaṃ*). Such *s'araṇāgati* is the most efficacious means to *mōkṣa* and the removal of suffering. The Lord reveals Himself to the *prapanna,* who seeks Him as his absolute refuge.

If the *Mūlamantra* explains the theory of *s'araṇāgati* and the *Dvayamantra* elaborates it, and shows also how it is to be practised, the *Carama S'lōka* explicitly prescribes *saraṇāgati* as the means to be adopted by the *mumukṣu* incapable of *Bhakti Yōga* or as the response to divine grace and expressly promises him release from all the accumulated load of sins that prevent his enjoyment of the birthright of absolute service to the Lord in *Paramapada.* The first quarter refers to the *mumukṣu* who is anxious to be released from the burden of *saṃsāra* but is

unable to undergo the ardous discipline of *Bhakti Yōga* and the second prescribes the taking of refuge in the Lord as the sole Saviour. The second half promises the fullest release from sin to those who practise self-surrender with supreme faith in the Saviour and bids them be of good cheer. It is the call of the Redeemer to the whole of humanity: "Come unto me, all ye who are heavily laden, abandoning your egoism, and I shall give you eternal life and myself." The sinner seeks God and is saved, and God seeks the sinner and is satisfied. The unique value of the *Carama S'lōka* lies in its universal appeal to all sinners to seek refuge in Him and be saved.

The scheme of *prapatti* is elaborated in its six *aṅgas* or parts known as *ānukūlya saṅkalpa*, *prātikūlya varjana*, *mahāvis'vāsa*, *kārpaṇya*, *gōptṛtvavaraṇa* and *ātma nikṣēpa*.[1] The first furnishes the *satvic* motive to follow the will of the *s'ēṣī*. When the human will is emptied of egoism or *ahaṅkāra*, it is divinely enriched and attuned to the redemptive purpose of the *rakṣaka*. It also connotes the will of the *mumukṣu* to serve all *jīvas* (*sarvabhūtānukūlya*). *Prātikūlya varjana* is the negative way of stating the same truth, and consists in the renunciation of what is repugnant to the Lord. *Mahāvis'vāsa* is absolute and firm faith in the saving grace of God as the universal *rakṣaka*. It is unshakable confidence in *prapatti* as guaranteeing God. The fourth *aṅga* known as *kārpaṇya* expresses the feeling of incapacity to follow the prescribed path of *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*. Tho sense of utter unworthiness and helplessness creates this feeling of humility. The fifth is *gōptṛtvavaraṇa* and is the act of seeking the *dayā* of the Lord as the only

[1] *Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā*, XXXVII. ii, 27 and 28 as quoted in Vēdānta Dēs'ika's *Rahasyatraya Sāra*. Chap. XI. The last, *ātma nikṣēpa*, is sometimes called the *aṅgin* of which the other five are *aṅgas* or parts.

hope for *mōkṣa*. The last factor is *ātma nikṣēpa* which consists in self-oblation to the *s'ēṣī* with the conviction that such self-donation is itself a gift of God's grace. The *prapanna* is tormented by the thought that the transgression of the divine commands entails the wrath of the moral ruler and that the wages of sin is moral and spiritual death. The sinfulness of sin is too deep for expiation or recompense. But the religion of *s'araṇāgati* dispels the scepticism of the moral consciousness and the fears of spiritual fall are dispelled by the assurance that *kṛpā* reigns in the realm of religion and ousts the evils of *avidyā-karma* and that no sin is so sinful as to exhaust the redemptive grace of God. *Mahāvis'vāsa* is the absolutely clear and distinct knowledge of the omnipotence of *dayā* and is therefore the central and ruling motive of *Prapatti Yōga*. The other conditions follow from this spiritual conviction and exalt the levels of conation, feeling and cognition. While *Bhakti Yōga* is the arduous building up of devotion from below *a posteriori*, *prapatti* is the *a priori* way of divine *dayā* and is the descent of *kṛpā* into the realm of *karma*; but whether it is from earth to heaven or from heaven to earth, the essentials of *bhakti* and *prapatti* are the same, namely, the illumined faith in the saving grace of God as both the *upāya* and the *upēya*. The motive also determines the nature of the end; and he who seeks *kaivalya* or *ais'varya* attains it, and he who seeks *Bhagavān* attains *Bhagavān*. On realizing other ends, *Bhagavān* may or may not be attained but, by realizing God, all other ends are also realized. "Whom He chooses, unto him He reveals Himself."[1] The *jñānī* seeks God as his *s'arīrin* and offers himself to Him. God in turn seeks the *jñānī* as His *s'arīrin* and guarantees *mukti* to him.

[1] *Kaṭh. Up.*, I. ii. 22.

Prapatti as the religion of *ātmanikṣēpa* is also considered under the three aspects of *phala samarpaṇa*, *bhara samarpaṇa* and *svarūpa samarpaṇa* or the renouncement of the hedonistic, the moralistic and the egoistic views of life. Of these, *phala samarpaṇa* or *phalatyāga* is the abandonment of the hedonistic motive that self-satisfaction or happiness is the supreme end of *prapatti*. While the seekers after *ais'varya* and *kaivalya* pursue the happiness of *Svarga* and the inner joy of *atmāvalōkana*, the true follower of *prapatti* knows that as an *ananyārha s'ēṣa* or absolute dependent, he subsists in the *s'ēṣī* and exists for His satisfaction and so gives up every form of egoistic or selfish satisfaction. True *s'ēṣatva* is realized when the *s'ēṣa* knows that he is nothing, has nothing and does nothing and thus renounces the selfish feelings of 'I,' 'my' and 'mine' or *kartṛtva*, *mamatā* and *svārtha*. The verbs 'to be' and 'to have' agree with the subject *ahaṅkāra* and have thus no place in the grammar of *prapatti*. Even the consciousness of religious individualism that arises from the joy of freedom or *ātmarakṣā* savours of selfism and has therefore to be abandoned and overcome. Secondly, *bharasamarpaṇa* is the renunciation of the sense of responsibility involved in the saving act. Redemption or *ātmarakṣā* comes from the *rakṣaka* who is Himself the *sādhya* and the *sādhana* or the end and the means and not from the will of the *prapanna*, owing to his impotence to follow the ordained path. *Prapatti* removes the heaviness of heart due to the sense of duty and effort and to the burden of sin. While *Bhakti Yōga* demands ceaseless moral effort and spiritual arduousness and vigil, *prapatti* is not such a toilsome task and requires only a change of heart and a living faith in the saving power of *dayā*. By casting oneself on *dayā*, the weight of world-weariness

is lifted off and the *prapanna* becomes fearless (*nirbhaya*). Thirdly, *svarūpatyāga* is not only the elimination of *ahaṅkāra* but is also the gift of the self or *ātman* to God who is its real owner or Self. The *jīva* lives but is not the *jīva* as such but the *s'arīrin* or *s'ēṣī* that lives in it. The term '*ahaṃ*' is the self that has its being and worth only in the *s'arīrin* and therefore *svarūpatyāga* consists in giving back the self to its Owner. All these forms of *sātvika* sacrifice or service are deduced from the first principles of religious experience consisting in the life of God in the love of man; it marks a radical or revolutionary change from the egocentric view or *svasvāmitva* to the theocentric or Kṛṣṇa-centric view of *pāratantrya* which is summed up in the truth *sarvam Kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu.* Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa and is offered to Kṛṣṇa. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* meaning of *prapatti* is summarized in a *kārikā* of Vēdānta Dēsika[1] as follows:

> *Svāmin svas'ēṣam svavas'am svabharatvēna nirbharam* |
> *svadatta svadhiyā svārtham svasmin nyasyasi mām svayaṃ* ||

The word *svārtha* denotes *phalasamarpaṇa* signifying that the *sēṣa* exists for the satisfaction of the *s'ēṣī* and that the only end of *ātma samarpaṇa* is the realization of His will as the only will. The words *svabharatvēna nirbharaṃ* signify *bhara samarpaṇa* or the idea that *ātmarakṣā* is the concern of the *s'araṇya* and not of the *s'araṇāgata*. The word *svas'ēṣa* connotes the fact of self-oblation as the main motive for *prapatti.* The couplet thus expounds the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* idea that the *ātman* has *jñātṛtva* or self-consciousness, *kartṛtva* or freedom and *bhōktṛtva* or feeling *tone* but the *jīva* as the *s'arīra* of *Paramātman* has its triple

[1] Vēdānta Dēs'ika's *Nyāsa Das'aka*, verse 2.

function of knowing, willing and feeling fulfilled organically in the life of the *s'arīrin. Prapatti* is the religious conclusion of the philosophy of the *s'arīra-s'arīrī* relation and it affirms that the *s'arīrin* is Himself the *upāya* and the *upēya*. The terms *svārtha, svadatta* and *svayam nyasyasi* proclaim the truth that *ātmasamarpaṇa* is self-donation to the *para s'ēṣī* who is the giver and the gift, the end and the endeavour. The theory of *vyāja* or justification by faith as developed by Vēdānta Dēs'ika further illuminates the meaning of *Prapatti Yōga* and its ultimate relation to the saving grace of the *s'araṇya*. The seeker after *prapatti* has spiritual freedom to serve the Lord and become an instrument in the divine scheme. His will is divinely determined (*parādhīna*) and not self-determined (*svadhīna*). *Prapatti Yōga* is a free act of abolute self-surrender to the *rakṣaka* without any hedonistic or utilitarian considerations. It is not a way of recompense or a legalistic view of *karma* resting on antecedent merit but is justification by faith. Merit has ethical meaning, but *dayā* is a divine quality and is therefore amoral. Forgiveness transcends the moralistic view of *karma*; but if it is free without even the desire to deserve it, the doctrine might encourage favouritism, laxity and license. *Dayā* as the amoral is the fulfilment of the moral, and is not hostile to it. The self seeks God's grace and strives to deserve it and the grace of God lifts him up.

The *Sūtrakāra* affirms the truth that if *kṛpā* or grace is not considered to be rooted in righteousness, arbitrariness and cruelty would have to be attributed to the divine nature.[1] The forgiveness of the *rakṣaka* presupposes the quality of forgivableness in the *jīva* and a change of heart. The gift of *dayā*

[1] na vaiṣamya nairghṛṇye sāpēkṣatvāt. *V. S.*, II. i. 34.

may be unreserved, but should not be undeserved. The theory of *vyāja* reconciles the claims of human endeavour and divine *dayā* on the principle that a trivial cause may occasion a mighty effect, *e.g.*, the turning of a switch may result in the illumination of a whole city. Similarly, a spark, nay, even a show, of contrition may result in a conflagration and consume the effect of age-long *karma*. A little leaven of sincerity may leaven the whole life of the *jīva*. An infinitesimal effort may lead to infinite mercy. *Vyāja* results from the feeling of *ākiñcanya* or one's moral and spiritual littleness. This, however, should be genuine and not a mere show of penitence to serve as an excuse for divine intervention. The act of forgiveness presupposes a change of heart and this is a qualitative and not a quantitative change; contrition alone opens the flood gates of *kṛpā* and it is more in the spirit than in the letter. The words *s'araṇam vraja* in the *Carama S'lōka* of the *Gītā*, though they presuppose and posit the fact of redemption as the expression of causeless grace (*nirhētuka kṛpā*), at the same time emphasize the fact that grace needs a *vyāja* or occasion to reveal itself. The seed can sprout only in a suitable soil, and *kṛpā* can never take root in the soil of hard-heartedness, dissimulation, hostility or atheistic scepticism.

S'rī Vaiṣṇavism extols the *Rāmāyaṇa* as a text-book of practical religion *par excellence* and regards it as a *s'araṇāgati vēda*, of which the topic known as *abhaya pradāna* relating to the acceptance by Rāma of Vibhīṣaṇa's surrender to Him is the *Upaniṣad*. By the application of the six *Mimāmsā* rules of interpretation known as *upakrama*, *upasaṃhāra*, *abhyāsa*, *apūrvatva*, *arthavāda* and *upapatti*, it is proved that the epic as a unity with continuity of

meaning and value has as its central theme the redemption of the *jīvas* by self-surrender to the Lord. It is the epic exposition of the metaphysical, moral and religious aspects of *Vēdānta*, *i.e.*, *tattva*, *hita* and *puruṣārtha* in the light of the *s'aranāgati s'āstra*, *Paratattva* or the supreme truth is the transcendental Brahman of the *Upaniṣads*, that incarnated into humanity as the *sarva s'araṇya* or saviour of all beings; *s'āraṇāgati* is the universal means of salvation and is therefore the *parama hita* or greatest good. The supreme end or *puruṣārtha* is *kaiṅkarya* or service to Him and to all *jīvas*. The main theme of all the six *Kāṇḍas* is the divine assurance of forgiveness to all that seek refuge at the feet of God whether they are human, sub-human, or celestial *jīvas*, including even Rākṣasas who are ever hostile to the cosmic redemptive purpose of *Īs'vara*. The Hindu view of animal and other subhuman species seeking the *rakṣaka* has got a spiritual as opposed to the naturalistic foundation, owing to the kinship of all *jīvas* and their common divine heritage. It is based on the idea of *karma* and rebirth and the spiritual development of the *jīva*, which, though eternal, self-conscious and free by nature, falls from its high state and enters into various bodies owing to its *karma*. The highly evolved, who abuse their freedom, lapse into vice and are born as birds and other animals, may get glimpses of their divine origin and seek pardon through penitence. The classic examples of the materialized Ahalyā touched by the lotus feet of the Lord leaping into life once again, the afflicted Kākāsura flying to the Lord for mercy after his vain and weary flight through all the worlds for fear of life, Gajēndra, crying out to the Creator for protection in its distress and Sugrīva seeking refuge at the feet of Rāma, are freely quoted by the devout Hindu, as inspiring types of the redemptive acts of the *rakṣaka*.

The fullest exposition of the divine assurance of salvation or *abhaya pradāna* is given in the section dealing with Vibhīṣaṇa *s'araṇāgati*. Vibhīṣaṇa, the virtuous, denounces Rāvaṇa's wickedness, renounces all his relations and possessions and flies from Laṅkā and falls at the feet of Rāma invoking His mercy. He typifies the *jīva* that dreads the follies and allurements of the sensuous life surrounding it, owing to its isolation from the Lord and insular life and, equipped with the five *aṅgas* of *prapatti*, soars homeward and Godward and yearns for the security and stability of *abhaya pradāna* or God's assurance of salvation. The Lord is *sarvalōka s'araṇya*, the saviour and refuge of the whole universe; Vibhīṣaṇa, though a Rākṣasa by birth, seeks refuge at the feet of the *s'araṇya* as the only hope of life, and the Lord accepts him by proclaiming His redemptive purpose to all the three worlds and summoning them to share His divine love. "Come unto me, all ye who are heavily laden, saints and sinners, *dēvas* and Rākṣasas, all the *jīvas* of the world; even a show of friendship melts me and moves me to give you succour and safety. Even the dove in the tree gave up its life to serve as food to the hungry hunter that sought its shade. None that seeks me as Saviour will ever be given up by me. Him shall I succour and save from all his enemies. I can never give up such a person. No one who seeks protection shall ever be forsaken. This is the law of love approved of by all good men."[1] The universal Saviour or *sarvalōka s'araṇya* that is the inner self of all *jīvas* frees the *jīva* from the fears of *saṃsāra* and gives him eternal life and joy. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is therefore extolled as the shrine of *s'araṇāgati* of the scripture of self-surrender and it inspires every one with the hope of everlasting life and joy.

[1] *Rāmāyaṇa*, 'Yuddhakāṇḍa,' XVIII. 3 and 33.

The theory of *Bhakti Yōga* and *Prapatti Yōga* as *sādhyōpāyas* is not accepted by the school founded by Piḷḷai Lōkācarya (known as the *Tenkalai* school). According to it, *Bhakti Yōga* as a building up of devotion is, like Jacob's ladder, a vain and futile attempt besides being arduous and artificial, while *Prapatti Yōga* the alternative method, founded on the feeling of *ākiñcanya*, or the sense of unworthiness, is a confession of impotence. The *Tenkalai* school therefore interprets *prapatti* not as a *yōga* or human endeavour, but a mere faith in the grace of a God or *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa*. The paradox of *prapatti s'āstra* arises from the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* truth that the *sarva s'ēṣī* is both the *upāya* and the *prāpya*, the means as well as the end of *Vēdāntic* life, and it leads to the dualism between the spiritual effort of the *jīva* and the spontaneity of divine grace. The *Tenkalai* denial of human initiative as a requisite condition of redemption leads to the predication of arbitrariness and favouritism in the divine will. The denial by the other school of *Vaiṣṇavism*, the *Vaḍakalai* school, of the absoluteness of divine grace, or the free flow of divine *dayā*, without even a *vyāja*, affirms the primacy and priority of human freedom. This school upholds the *upāya* theory as the true position as it has *s'āstraic* support, and employs the analogy of the young monkey clinging to the mother for protection to illustrate the *mumukṣu* seeking refuge at the feet of the *s'araṇya* or saviour. The *Tenkalai* school maintains the opposite view, as it coheres with mystic experience and illustrates it by the analogy of the cat carrying the kitten in its mouth or the *mārjāra nyāya*, as contrasted with the *markaṭa nyāya*, of the *Vaḍakalais*. The *Vaḍakalai* and *Tenkalai* views are sometimes compared to the volitional type and the self-surrender type mentioned by William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and the Christian

distinction between justification by works and justification by faith. But the comparison is superficial as the distinction between volition and self-surrender or that between works and faith is entirely different from the *S'ri Vaiṣṇava* views of *sahētuka katākṣa* or grace arising from a cause and *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa* or grace not arising from any cause. Before examining these theories comparatively, it is essential to define the meaning of *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa* as explained by the *Tenkalai* school.

The *Tenkalais* insist on the operation of grace as unconditioned by human endeavour and as absolute, and they support this conclusion by appeal to revelation, reasoning and sense-perception. The well-known text, "Whom the Self chooses, by him is He attained"[1] is confirmed by the *Carama S'lōka* of the *Gītā* and the mystic experience of Nammāḷvār. The *Gītā* guarantees God to man and it is in the light of this operative *dayā* afforded by the *Carama S'lōka* that all the chapters should be read. *Mōkṣa* is not a goal to be won by *yōgic* discipline but is a gift of God to be received with gladness. If the Saviour is both the *upāya* and the *upēya*, the theory of seeking grace is self-contradictory. Forgiveness is justification by love and not by antecedent merit. *Kṛpā* is divinely bestowed and not won by moral effort. The moralistic view insists on a life of righteousness and piety and conformity to law, but such self-culture breeds a mood of self-righteousness and often sinks into the conceit of pietism. Forgiveness is a gift of the forgiver, and is spontaneous and free, and therefore is its own value. Godliness alone makes for goodness and not *vice versa*, as goodness cannot lead to godliness. Redemption justifies itself and is

[1] yamēvaiṣa vṛṇute tēna labhyaḥ—*Katha Up.*, I. ii. 22.

not causally determined. It is not virtue that calls out *dayā*, though *dayā* may call out virtue. *Dayā* comes as the leaves come to a tree. The pardoning Lord is the god of the sinner and He seeks the evil-doer more than He does the *sātvika*. He even relishes the physical evil or *dōṣa* in the *prapanna* like the mother who embraces with pleasure her dirt-stained child returning from play. The religion of *nirhētuka-dayā* should not be corrupted by economic and hedonistic considerations, as the calculating nature is fatal to its free flow. The difference between *mulaippāl* or mother's milk freely secreted for the baby and *vilaippāl* or milk sold in the market for money is the difference between the operative grace of the Lord or *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa* and His consequent grace or *sahētuka kaṭākṣa*. The reign of *dayā* is absolute and dominates the ideas of moral and spiritual endeavour and ousts them from the realm of *s'araṇāgati*.

The *Gītā* is the unique expression of the gospel of *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa* in which the Lord is at once the teacher, mediator and saviour. The *rahasyas* or secret doctrines of the *Mūlamantra*, the *Dvaya* and the *Carama S'lōka* contain the quintessence of *prapatti s'āstra* and drive home the truth that the *rakṣaka* is Himself, the *upāya* and the *prāpya* and that His *dayā* is not conditioned by the causal law of *karma* or the moral needs of retribution. The *rakṣaka* is Himself the saviour as well as the salvation, the way as well as the goal, of the religious consciousness. The religion of *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa* is summarized in the *Sūtra* style in Tamil by Piḷḷai Lōkācārya in his work, *S'rī Vacana Bhūṣaṇa*, which expounds the nature of *puruṣakāra* and *prapatti*. It denies the value of *Bhakti Yōga* disciplined by *karma* and *jñāna*, as the effort involved in the process is not commensurate with the spiritual

gain and even *prapatti* has no value if it is practised as a means to *mukti*. *Bhakti* and *prapatti* follow necessarily from the grace of the *rakṣaka* and are not essential antecedents of such grace. The endeavour of the *jīva* to attain the Lord is *svagata svīkāra* (or acceptance resulting from one's endeavour) and is utterly futile, but the idea of the *rakṣaka* seeking the *jīva* is *paragata svīkara* or acceptance arising from the Lord's will and is natural and efficacious. The working of the redemptive will of the Lord is inconceivable in terms of the causal category as the law of *dayā* knows no higher law and is self-explanatory; grace ceases to be grace, if it is election by works. The only *upāya* to be followed by the *mumukṣu* is to renounce the *upāya* mentality, receive the grace of God in a passive way and respond to the divine call of *kṛpā* when it comes. The *jīva*, as a self-conscious and self-active entity, should give up its *ahaṅkāra* and become a thinking thing so that it may be the receptacle of *kṛpā*. But the *ātman* in such an inert state is still the *ātman* and is incapable of the inert existence of matter; its spirituality is then consummated in service, *ātma dāsya* or *kaiṅkarya*. Work is worship of God followed by service to all *jīvas*. The *prapanna* is a *bhāgavata* and his spiritual worth is not in any way influenced by his birth and social status. The idea of service extends to all castes and outcasts irrespective of the social distinction determined by the *varṇāśrama* ideal. Service to the *ācārya* is more important than service to the Lord as the *ācārya* is essentially interested in saving the disciple, whereas the Lord is both a severe Judge and a Saviour.

The difference between this school and the *Vaḍakalai* school is not about the exact relation between *karma* and

kṛpā, as both schools agree in the definition of *mukti* as the conquest of *karma* by *kṛpā* and its final cancellation. The main problem is the dualism between *sahētuka kaṭākṣa* and *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa*, and is more religious than ethical. Vēdānta Des'ika's theory of *vyāja* is a reconciliation of the extremes, as it insists only on a gesture and change of heart on the part of the sinner and the difference between contrition and responsiveness to *dayā* is not radical. A spark of repentance destroys the whole load of *avidyā-karma* and thus the infinite series is annihilated by infinitesimal effort. The distinction that Dēs'ika draws between the two standpoints of the *sādhyōpāya* and the *siddhōpāya* is intended to further narrow down the issue and bridge the gulf. Brahman is eternally self-realized and free and is the *siddhōpāya*; but the *mumukṣu* seeks the grace of God by *bhakti* and *prapatti*, as 'our will is somehow ours, only to make it His.' This distinction may be explained in terms of the noumenal aspect of grace which is free, and the phenomenal aspect where it is conditioned by effort. The *siddhōpāya* is the transcendental standpoint of *dayā* as the free cause which is self-conditioned and spontaneous. The *sādhyōpāya* is the phenomenal or human aspect in which the self is relatively free and derives such freedom from the noumenal source. The phenomenal is rooted in the noumenal and the opposition between the two is apparent and not real. Human freedom is a problem from the phenomenal point of view and a possession from the noumenal. What is known as the free causality of *dayā* noumenally is known as *yōga* from the phenomenal standpoint. When the *prapatti*-seeker becomes a *prapanna*, the problem is not only solved but dissolved. The *Tenkalai* school refuses to accept such distinctions and standpoints, as it stakes its faith in the absoluteness of *dayā* in which there is an identity of content

between the *upāya* and the *upēya*. The *Vaḍakalais* point to the moral and social dangers that might follow from the idea of absoluteness lapsing into the arbitrariness of election. If *dayā* is free and unconditioned, *vaiṣamya* or arbitrariness and *nairghṛṇya* or cruelty would be attributable to the divine nature. If the human will is in any way free, it conflicts with divine determinism. It is difficult to take the dilemma by the horns or escape between them or rebut it. *Dayā* is neither won by effort nor forced on the *jīva*. If the problem is restated in terms of the *S'ārīraka S'āstra* and not of the *Hētu S'āstra* or logic, the distinction becomes philosophically negligible. *Kaṭākṣa* or grace is neither *sahētuka* nor *nirhētuka*. It is based not on the logical view of causality but on organic union. Mystic experience is alogical and amoral in the sense that it is more and not less than the logical and the moral, and it is illegitimate to apply logical and ethical terms to what is transcendent. The gift of grace and self-gift are vitally related like the systole and the diastole and are not causally connected and their relation involves reciprocity and responsiveness. The sucking of the mother's milk bv the child is instinctively related to the spontaneous secretion of milk and the two form an organic process in the maintenance of life. It is impossible to divide the unitive process and decide how much comes from the *s'ēṣa* and how much, from the *s'ēṣi*. "You have got to deepen yourself in it or let it deepen itself in you, whatever phrase best expresses the fact to your mind."[1] The *jñānī* is dearest to God, the *s'arīrin*, and God is dearest to the *jñānī* the *s'arīra*, and this organic relation defies logical analysis. *Dayā* pours itself fully into the self and the self flows irrésistibly into *dayā* and it is undesirable to dissect this living flow into the logical categories of cause and effect.

[1] Bosanquet, *What Religion Is*, p. 21.

A comparison of the theories of redemption, *Vaiṣṇavite* and Christian, reveals points of striking similarity as well as difference between the two and enables us to estimate their relative values for the religious consciousness. Redemption is deliverance from sin or *pāpa* and the attainment of God or Brahman; and so the meaning of sin or *pāpa* has to be ascertained before the definition of deliverance or *mōkṣa* is attempted. Sin is not physical evil or suffering, though suffering may result from it as a penalty. Moral evil is the violation of the moral law of autonomy and it is a reproach to the self. The law is self-legislative, having its own dignity. Statutory religion appeals to the miraculous and the mysterious. It ministers to fear and superstition and substitutes magic for morality and affects the inner worth of life. To please God or the gods and win their favour by extra-moral methods is, however, alien to the spirit of true religion. Supernaturalism, with its anthropomorphic tendency, creates a magnified potentate or despot and thrives in an atmosphere of fear and credulousness and has often its nemesis in scepticism and irreligion. Morality, however, carries us into the very heart of reality when it seeks a sanction for its law of righteousness and accepts the faith in a moral ruler or *niyantā* who works in the hearts of all through goodness. The moral law on the religious level is known as *dharma* or duty, a divine command, and the violation of the command is called sin or *pāpa*. A good deed is better than a good intention; but an evil thought is worse than an act of wickedness, as it is an ancient inner perversity, which soils the soul itself and is a revolt against law. "We practise the evil which we would not and do not the good which we would, owing to the sin dwelling in us." The proneness to sin is regarded by Christianity as an inherent depravity or original sin which is inherited by us from the first man.

Christianity holds that sin is radical and natural, that man is an eternal sinner and that his first disobedience has multiplied itself and tainted humanity. *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* traces *pāpa* to human accountability and *avidyā-karma* which is *anādi* or causally inexplicable. The propensity to *pāpa* or sin is somehow there, but it is not original sin, as the *ātman* has the freedom to fall into sin or grow into godliness. The self is essentially pure and sin is only an accident. Sin is beginningless but has an end. Though as a moral fact sin is, in the religious realm it ought not to *be*. Every *jīva* is ultimately salvable and can attain *mōkṣa*. If the Lord cannot prevent evil and sin, He is not Almighty; if He can prevent it but will not, He is cruel. But it is the basic faith of redemptive religion that He can and will prevent evil and sin.

Deliverance from sin is the fundamental aim of religion and the hope of deliverance lies in the saving grace of the Redeemer and casting oneself on His mercy. If God is the cause of sin, deliverance from it would mean turning away from Him and not turning to Him as the Saviour. God is holy and *amala* or spotless and the sinfulness of sin is a measure of the holiness of the Holy. Legalistic religion thus exalts God by increasing the distance between the Holy and the sinner. But it depresses man and makes him conclude that redemption can never be secured by expiation. True religion is not juristic and its definition of God as the Saviour inspires the sinner with the assurance of deliverance. The belief in original sin or *nitya-samsāratva* and in predestination results in the redemptive faith in grace as a gratuitous gift of God. According to Augustine, grace works pre-veniently and lifts man out of sin, works co-operantly and makes him righteous and works irresistibly owing to the omnipotence of the divine

will. *Gratia operans* comes from God. *Gratia co-operans* is based on human will. But grace is not a supernatural force or energy emitted by the Lord and infused into the soul from without. Grace is not the infusion of the physical force that acts on the soul externally and effects a regeneration. Theologians of a different school therefore protest against the theory of supernatural force and insist on inner sanctification and justification by faith, as contrasted with justification by works and the remission of sin by confession. The two types of thought are represented in a different way by the doctrines of Thomism and Molinism. Thomism holds that the human will is predestined by God and consents to the divine influx. But Molinism is opposed to the view of predestination as it holds that the divine will is alongside of the human will and that grace has good use. The same contrast is stressed by the doctrines of pietism and mysticism. The former insists on the need for inner purification and, as a religion of the heart, it is opposed to ceremonialism and justification by faith. But it over-emphasizes the subjective value of redemption and is individualistic in tone and temper. Mysticism has a leaning towards the idea of absolute grace and the downpour of divine love into the human heart. The Christian theory of the single birth of the self does not explain the moral injustices accruing in cases of unmerited suffering, and the idea of substitutionary or vicarious sacrifice and atonement does no justice to the law of retribution. The doctrine of the "One begotten Son" and the "Chosen people" is dogmatic and coercive and it does violence to the history of universal redemption and the working of divine mercy through different channels. Incarnation is the invasion into humanity of divine mercy in times of moral crisis and it is not just and adequate to explain redemption as the regenerative act of the only

begotten Son of God suffering vicariously for the sins or the *karma* of humanity. Every *jīva* is a son of man who bears the cross of his *karma* and, as the Son of God, has his sin destroyed by His *dayā*. Atonement for sin is really attained by the at-one-ment of *bhakti*. Sin is ultimately self-alienation from God and it stultifies itself by contact with *kṛpā* or grace; it is then destroyed and the sinner is transformed and reconciled to God. The historical sense is changed into the consciousness of eternal life. The Christian theory of wheat and chaff or election and eternal damnation conflicts with the doctrine of the universal Saviour. The *Vaiṣṇavite* view of *sarvalōka s'araṇya* and the omnipotence of His *dayā*, whether absolute or self-limited by the *jīva's karma*, guarantees eventual salvation to all *jīvas* irrespective of their social, religious and other differences.

The lives and teachings of the founders of Christianity and of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* also bring out the points of resemblance and difference between the two religions, and emphasize the spiritual hospitality of the latter. They can be studied from three standpoints, *viz.*, the supernatural, the historical and institutional, and the mystic. The supernatural Christ is the only begotten Son of God who worked many miracles as a Messiah to testify to the imminent advent of the Kingdom of God. The doctrines of the Immaculate Conception, the Resurrection, the miracles performed during the ministrations and the apocalyptic faith are belief or overbeliefs which cannot be tested by reasoning. The birth of Nammāḷvār at Tirunagari in the Tinnevelly District was also a divine occurrence and it was foretold by earlier prophets. His enlightenment under the tamarind tree (an *avatāra* of Ādi S'ēṣa), the mystery of Madhurakavi Āḷvār, a wise seer, who was drawn to him from

the distant north by a strange celestial light and who became his disciple; the prophetic vision of the succeeding *ācāryas* who formed the apostolic succession and the *Vaiṣṇavites* of the white island 'S'vēta Dvīpa' who heralded the destruction of *Kali*, are miraculous occurrences which bore testimony to the strange workings of God and His intervention with the natural order. But historic criticism distrusts such supernatural occurrences which are a breach of the uniformity of nature. The dogmatic faith that *esse* is *credi* and that miracles are designed to destroy atheism runs counter to the moral argument. Historic religion therefore dwells mainly on the narration of spiritual occurrences and the interpretation of their inner purpose. Jesus, from this standpoint, was only a historic person who was the descendant of David and Abraham, was baptized by John the Baptist and then went to the wilderness where he withstood the temptations of the devil and underwent a spiritual course. He then went from place to place preaching the advent of the Kingdom of God, gathered his twelve disciples to continue the ministration and was crucified on the cross after establishing the reign of love. The acts of the Apostles and the history of the church reveal their purpose of evangelization and conquest of the world for Christ. The life of Nammāḻvār is a chronicle of his *yōgic* experience under the tamarind tree for sixteen years, of his initiation into *bhakti* by his teacher, and of the remaining twenty years of his spiritual life spent in devotional experience. The outpourings of his *bhakti* in the form of Tamil songs are now regarded as *Upaniṣad*. This *Upaniṣad*, *Drāviḍa Upaniṣad* as it is called, was lost for a while and was recovered by the great *yōgin* Nāthamuni, who established the *Vaiṣṇavite* tradition and started spreading the gospel of universal *dayā* among all persons. It was

continued by his apostolic successors such as Āḷavandār, Rāmānuja, Piḷḷai Lōkācārya and Vēdānta Dēs'ika. This *Vaiṣṇavite* tradition is now growing into popularity throughout the country and outside it, in suitable forms, as the religion of redemption.

Historic and institutional religion has a tendency to uniformity and standardization, and the form often kills the spirit. The mystic, who has faith in the personal experience of God, therefore, thinks of Christs and Nammāḷvārs as specialists in spirituality and patterns of godliness. The real miracle is the moulding of the soul and the realization of the Kingdom of God in the inner sanctuary of the *ātman*. Life, light and love are the real trinity, and self-gift to God and sharing the experience with others are the real vocation of the mystic, who intuits the truth "I live, yet not I but God in me." Nammaḷvār was a born mystic sustained by the love of God and, as a super-*prapanna*, he extended the hospitality of his divine experience to the whole world of *jīvas*. with a view to establishing a spiritual community of *bhaktas* or mystics. *Vaiṣṇavism* does not favour the monopolist mentality exhibited in the doctrine of "the chosen people of the God of Israel" and the "Judgment Day." From all the three standpoints S'rī Kṛṣṇa's teachings as contained in the Song on the chariot, (the *Bhagavad Gītā*) are more comprehensive and catholic than those of Christianity expressed in the Sermon on the Mount. *Prapatti S'āstra*, as the gospel of salvation, is designed by the Saviour to draw erring humanity to Himself, and wean them from their career of sin and sorrow. It is only this religion of *dayā* that is the solace of life and the solace of death, and has the highest claim to universality. Its definition of the absolute, while it includes the *Upaniṣadic* idea of Brahman and *Īs'vara*

and the *Pāñcarātra* idea of *Bhagavān*, exceeds them by its concept of *dayānidhi.* The Lord is rich in mercy and has not *dayā* as His differentia but is *dayā* itself and is therefore impersonal. *Dayā* is for *dayā's* sake, and is not the fruit of righteousness, and is therefore not juristic or moralistic. *Dayā* is not a process of placating the holy wrath of God, and is not vindictive and retributive. It does not brook bartering at all by the arithmetical calculations of *puṇya-pāpa* and schemes of rewards and penalties. It does not connote forgiveness by instalments, as it is spontaneous in nature and instantaneous in effect. While philosophy expounds the nature of *Bhagavān* as the *s'arīrin* of the *jīva*, *Prapatti S'āstra* defines *dayā* as the soul of *Bhagavān* Himself, as it is the source, sustenance and satisfaction of the divine nature. *Dayā* dominates the creative urge of *Īs'vara* and is the underlying motive even in destruction.[1] Creation therefore does not really groan and travail in pain, but is conceived in love. Forgiveness implies the forgetfulness of sin, and *dayā* therefore limits, so to say, the omniscience and foreknowledge of *Īs'vara* and changes the *sarvajña* (All-Knower) into *avijñātā*. *Dayā* dwells for ever as the inner ruler of the Self and enters into the heart of incarnation. It forces the cosmic ruler or Nārāyaṇa to drive *nara's* chariot and from the chariot-seat to give utterance to the gospel of redemption. Redemption is not restricted by the distinctions of birth and status, and, in its universality of appeal, it extends to the *jīvas* even in sub-human bodies. The *asura*, that is steeped in cruelty and motiveless malignity, has as much chance of regeneration as the saint that follows the way of righteousness, if only there be a change of heart. *Dayā* is unaware of distinction, election and elimination, and runs counter to the doctrine of

[1] Vēdānta Dēs'ika's *Dayā S'ataka*, 16 and 17.

the Judgment Day when the good are saved and the wicked are smitten and sent to hell. While in Christianity Judgment follows redemption, in *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* justice is overpowered by redemptive love. Even in our human relations, we are commanded to render to no man evil for evil, but to bless them that persecute us; for evil is overcome not by evil but by good. " Love works no ill to anyone. Love is kind and never fails. It bears all things and believes all things. It is never provoked and takes no account of evil." Human love is but an infinitesimal expression of the tenderness and mercy of the Lord; and the religion of *prapatti* is the gospel of universal forgiveness. *Kali* is the age of confusion and carnal-mindedness, and the only way of salvation lies in the discerning faith in the saving grace of the *s'araṇya* or Redeemer. No gospel is more inspiring than the *Gītā* call of *dayā* and its assurance of deliverance to all *jīvas*.

CHAPTER XVII

UBHAYA VĒDĀNTA

SECTION I. THE RELIGION OF THE "S'RĪ BHĀṢYA"

AN attempt was made in the preceding chapters to expound *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion by exhibiting the synthetic unity of the metaphysical, spiritual and religious aspects of *Vēdānta* (of *tattva*, *hita* and *puruṣārtha*) and gradually developing the philosophy of the *prakāra* or mode into the religion of *bhakti* and *prapatti*. The first two chapters of the *Vēdānta Sūtras* form a metaphysical enquiry into the nature of *sat* as the supreme *tattva* or *saguṇa* Brahman; the third defines the nature of *hita* as *vēdana*, *upāsanā* or *bhakti* and *prapatti*, and the last brings out the meaning of *puruṣārtha* as the attainment of Brahman. The essentials of this method are worthy of restatement in the present context. The ground of the existents is the only goal of experience (*kāraṇantu dhyēyaḥ*). Brahman is the root of philosophic thinking and the fruit of religious feeling and is the first cause and the final cause. The four chapters of the *Brahma Sūtras* reveal the synoptic insight of the *Sūtrakāra* and are a systematic elucidation of the truth step by step from the first *Sūtra* to the last. Each chapter of the *S'ārīraka S'āstra* is not merely a part or unit of the

whole and a member of an organic unity, but is itself a self-complete whole. A fresh insight into the *S'āstra* is afforded by Mahāmahōpādhyāya Kapistalam Dēs'ikācāriar in his master-thought that every *adhikaraṇa* or section is an *anubhava* or intuition of Brahman. What is metaphysically determined as the ultimate ground of all existence is also the supreme end of man's spiritual quest and yields a specific *anubhava* of the divine perfection. Each *adhikaraṇa* aims not merely at logical satisfactoriness or coherence but also at spiritual satisfaction. This synthetic insight corrects the ordinary idea that the *Vēdānta Sūtras* are a mere theoretic study of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and that the *Bhagavad Viṣaya* of Nammāḷvār embodies its practical aspect of spiritual experience and confirms the theory that *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is *Ubhaya Vēdānta*. It is the supreme merit of the *Svāmin* to have replaced the analytic method by the synthetic, and regarded each *adhikaraṇa* as the spiritual experience of a *Bhagavad guṇa* or auspicious quality of *Bhagavān* in the manner of the ecstatic outpourings of Nammāḷvār. This chapter furnishes a brief summary of his exposition, which throws fresh light on the meaning of the term ' philosophy of religion ' as it insists on the ultimate unity of philosophy and religion and the supreme truth that reality is realizable and that what is logically valid is also spiritually valuable. In his *Vyāsa Siddhānta Mārtāṇḍa*, the *Svāmin* shows that each *adhikaraṇa* both proves a philosophic truth and is a spiritual *anubhava* or experience of an attribute of Nārāyaṇa. In his later work, the *Adhikaraṇa Ratnamālā*, Nārāyaṇa is equated with S'rīnivāsa. The *Sūtras* consisting of one hundred and fifty-six *adhikaraṇas* or sections are valued as one hundred and fifty-six gems of the perfections or *kalyāṇa guṇas* strung together by devotional art. The absolute of the *Upaniṣad* is equated with the supreme

Nārāyaṇa, the God of religion, and is finally identified with the Redeemer, S'rīnivāsa.

The first section called the *Ikṣati Adhikaraṇa* refers to the *Chāndōgya* text in Chapter VI, section ii, "Being only was this, in the beginning, one only, without a second. . . . It thought: May I be many, may I grow forth." From the metaphysical standpoint it sets aside the *Sāṅkhyan* view that *pradhāna* is the cosmic ground, on account of the fact that intelligence can evolve and emerge only from the *ātman* and not from matter, and establishes the truth that the *sat* without a second is Brahman or the Supreme Self. The one without a second is the metaphysical self and not the mathematical aggregate or whole of parts. By its self-creative urge, it wills to be the many and becomes the manifold of *cit* and *acit* and becomes their source and *s'ēṣī*. The absolute is *Īs'vara* and not *Īs'vara*, *cit* and *acit*, as the cosmic process is the self-differentiation of *Īs'vara*. From the religious standpoint the *adhikaraṇa* is an *anubhava* or religious experience of the *sat* as the self of S'vētakētu. Brahman, the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe is the *ātman* of the *ātman* of S'vētakētu. The self that is the ground of the macrocosm is also the self of the microcosm. It brings out the *Vis'iṣṭād-vaitic* truth that the Self of the external world is the Self of every finite self by setting aside the identity philosophy that makes *māyā*-bound *Īs'vara* one with *avidyā*-ridden *jīva*. While the latter expresses logical identity, the former stresses spiritual intimacy. The world order as the expression of the creative urge of Brahman is really His *līlā*. The creative urge becomes an æsthetic impulse and is transformed into the religious motive of redemption. Soul-making is the sport of the *rakṣaka* and He shapes matter and moulds the soul

to make it His own. The next topic known as the *Ānandamaya Adhikaraṇa* discusses the *Taittirīya* text "Different from the self of *vijñana* is the other inner self which consists of bliss"[1] and dismisses the view that the term *ānandamaya* or the self of bliss is the *jīva* which is Brahman reflected in *avidyā*. The *Sūtrakāra* contends that the *jīvā* cannot create the universe and that the infinite alone as the *prakārin* can have infinite bliss and not the finite self. Brahman is blissful and imparts its nature to the *jīva*. The Highest and the one who attains the Highest are not identical. S'aṅkara follows the *Sūtra* argument and then dismisses the conclusion of the *Sūtrakāra* by a sudden *volte face* by his theory of two Brahmans deduced from his own independent reasoning. This *adhikaraṇa* expounds, from the *anubhava* aspect, the nature of the ecstasy of the unitive consciousness or *brahmānanda*. Brahman is the transcendentally blissful Being of beauty delighting in communicating His bliss to the *bhakta*, and enabling him to revel in the rapport of communion.

The third *adhikaraṇa* known as the *Antar Adhikaraṇa* rejects the anthropomorphic view that the shining self in the sun with a golden complexion and eyes like the lotus mentioned in the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* (I. vi.) is the *jīva*, as the quality of sinlessness referred to in the text pertains to the highest Brahman and not to *Āditya*. This distinction is clearly drawn in another *Upaniṣad*. "He who dwells in *Āditya*, whom the *Ādityā* does not know, who rules *Ādityā* from within."[2] Brahman is a boundless ocean, as it were, of compassion and kindness and has a divine form (*divyamangala*

[1] tasmādvā ētasmād vijñānamayāt |
anyōntara ātmānandamayaḥ | *Taitt. Up.*, *Anand.*, V.

[2] ya ādityē tiṣthan nādityād antarō yam ādityō na vēda yasyādityas' s'arīram ya ādityam antarō yamayati. *Br. Up.*, V. vii. 9.

vigraha) which He individualizes to satisfy His devotees. In its *anubhava* aspect, the section refers to the Supreme Sinless Self with an *aprākṛta* or transcendental form of His own whose ravishing beauty fills the *yōgin* with ecstasy, even more than His *svarūpa*. The next section refutes the mechanical theory of the universe and concludes that the term ākās'a in the *Chandōgya* text,[1] (1. ix. 1), is not the elemental ether but refers to the *Paramapuruṣa* or Supreme Self as the world ground with an infinity of perfections, who is at once the supreme and the only way to life. The *Jyōtir Vidyā* in the *Chandōgya Upaniṣad*, (III. xiii. 7) which explains reality as the *jyōtis* or light which shines above the heaven, higher than everything, refers not to physical light but to the Highest Self with infinite splendour. On the religious level, the section points to the existence of an absolutely luminous region of eternal bliss, in which the ineffably luminous being *jyōtiṣām jyōtis* or light of lights resides for ever, as distinguished from the phenomenal world of *līlā vibhūti* which expresses His sportive activity and redemptive joy. These opening *adhikaraṇas* or sections define the experience of Brahman as the creator or ground of existence, His blissful nature and His transcendental form or His *svarūpa, kalyāṇa guṇas* and *rūpa*, or *paratva*, *bhōgyatva* and *divyamangala-vigrahatva*. As these are brought out in order in the first three *s'atakas* of Nammāḷvār's *Tiruvaimoḷi*, the striking resemblance between the two is noteworthy. The last topic of the first part of the chapter proves that words connoting the *jīva* like Brahmā and Indra connote also by the principle of co-ordination or *sāmānādhikaraṇya* the Supreme Self of which they are the *s'arīra*. The meditation on Indra *prāṇa* is the

[1] sarvāṇi ha va imāni bhūtānyākās'ādēva samutpadyantē ākās'am pratyastam yanti.—*Ch. Up.*, I. ix. 1.

meditation on Brahman, the *s'arīrin* of Indra *prāṇa*. The real proof of the existence of Brahman is the experience of Brahman as in the case of Vāmadēva, Prahlāda and Nammāḷvār. The *ṛṣi* Vāmadēva intuits Brahman as the inner self of all *jīvas*. The term 'I' means Brahman as its *s'arīrin* when the *ṛṣi* says: "I am Manu, I am Sūrya."[1] Says Prahlāda: "As the infinite one abides within all, He constitutes my 'I' also. All is from me. I am all, within me is all."[2] Nammālvar also realizes that his true *ahaṃ* is Brahman as the life of his life. Brahman is the true 'I' of every 'I' in the universe and is its ultimate meaning. Thus the first part of the chapter establishes the truth that Brahman is the Supreme Self other than *prakṛti* and the *jīva*, is possessed of infinite auspicious qualities like bliss, and has a divine form of His own which is not due to *prakṛti* and *karma* and that loving meditation on the Self as the self of one's self leads to the attainment of eternal bliss. The true philosopher as the seeker after Brahman has no use for materialism and anthropomorphism and as the seer of Brahman, he enjoys eternal bliss. The second section of the first chapter consists of six topics and it establishes the supremacy of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* or inner self of all by ruling out the claims of the finite self. The first topic determines the meaning of the pantheistic text of the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad*, "All this is Brahman,"[3] and defines the nature of the Supreme Self as the *ātman* of the universe but without even the shadow of its imperfections. The word 'all' in the text does not connote the totality or society of selves, as the determining quality of *tajjalān* or *tajja*, *tadala* and *tadana*,

[1] tad haitat pas'yan ṛṣir vāmadēvaḥ pratipēdē ahaṃ manurabhavaṁ sūryas'ca.—*Bṛ. Up.*, III. iv. 10.

[2] sarvagatvād anantasya sa ēvāham avasthitaḥ। mattassarvam aham sarvam mayi sarvam sanātanō ॥—*V. P.*, I. xix. 89.

[3] sarvam khalvidam brahma tajjalān iti s'ānta upāsīta।—*Ch. Up.*, III. xiv. 1.

in the context refers only to Brahman and not to the *jīva*. Cosmic evolution and involution cannot be due to the finite self. The universe is in Brahman, but is not Brahman as it cannot exhaust its spiritual content. Brahman is immanent in the universe, but is not affected by its imperfections. On the religious side, the *adhikaraṇa* guarantee *mukti* or deliverance to the devotee whose mind is purified by meditation and freed from the opposites of *rāga* and *dvēṣa* and equipped with the seven virtues beginning with *vivēka*. Prahlāda realized Nārāyaṇa as the Inner Self of all and attained *samadars'ana* or the sense of spiritual similarity and solidarity, by which he lost the egoistic consciousness of the distinction between friend and foe. In His infinite mercy, the Lord of Love enters the heart of the devotee and imparts to him the fragrant deliciousness of bliss. Brahman is the *prāpya* or the subject to be realized and the *mukta* is the *prāptā* or one who realizes it.[1] The second topic applies the term ' eater ' in the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*[2] to the destructive aspect of Viṣṇu which implies not extinction but reabsorption. *Mukta* -making or bringing deliverance to all is the purpose of *Īs'vara* and even the destructive function which makes a " condiment " of death itself arises from His redemptive impulse. When the *jīva* sinks into sensuality and sin, the merciful Lord temporarily puts a stop to the cosmic process and deprives the *jīva* of his instruments of sense-experience so that there may be no further incentive to evil, like a loving father who cures the insanity of his son by imposing restrictions on his physical freedom. The two selves that live together in the cave of the heart[3] are the finite and the infinite. The *Upaniṣad*

[1] *Vide* the *Rahasyatraya Sāra*, ch. IV. end,
[2] yasya brahma ca kṣatrañca ubhē bhavata ōdane | mṛtyur yasyōpasēcanam. —*Kaṭh. Up.*, I. ii. 25.
[3] *Kaṭh. Upan.*, I. iii. 1.

(I. ii. 12) affirms that the wise man who meditates on the Self who is hidden in the cave is rid of sorrow and refers to the distinctive attributes of the *ātman* as the meditating subject and *Paramātman* as the inner Self or object of meditation. This section has a deep religious significance and shows that the infinite Lord in His boundless tenderness is unable to bear the separation of His other self and therefore stations Himself in the heart of the *jīva* with a view to leading him back to his highest abode. The aim of *Vēdānta* is to reveal the divinity that lies concealed in the heart of all *jīvas*.

The third topic expounds the meaning of the *Upakōsala Vidyā* in the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* (IV. xv. 1). The *puruṣa* within the eye is Brahman, the fearless and the immortal. The *Sūtra* eliminates the other alternatives, *viz.*, that the *puruṣa* is the reflected self or *pratibiṃba ātman*, the *jīva* or a god, and affirms the truth that it is Brahman, on the ground that the attributes of *saṃyadvāma*, *vāmanī* and *bhāmanī* refer to the Highest Self. All blessings go towards Him ; He leads all blessings and shines in all the worlds. Brahman is *ka* and *kha* of the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* (IV. x. 5) and is supremely blissful. In the *anubhava* aspect, Brahman as the Inner Self is eternally blissful and communicates bliss to the finite self and leads him gloriously to the world beyond.

The fourth topic throws light on the nature of Brahman as the *antaryāmin*, the Inner Ruler immortal, and on the organic relation between Brahman and the universe of *cit* and *acit* as *s'arīrin* and *s'arīra*. It strikes the key-note of *Vēdāntic* thought and experience. The seventh section of the fifth chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* develops the metaphysical truth that Brahman, as the immanent self of all the

worlds, of all living beings, all *Dēvas*, and all the *Vēdas*, is their inner meaning. The Absolute Substance of the *Sad Vidyā* is the inner self of the *Antaryāmi Vidyā* and as the life of life, the seer of all the seers and the love of all loves, He constitutes the *s'arīrin* of the universe in the collective and the individual aspects. This view alone reconciles the so-called monistic view of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the theistic teaching of the *S'vētās'vatara* without torturing any text or twisting its meaning. The crass anthropomorphic idea of the *s'arīra-s'arīrin* relation as that between the mind and the body is refuted by the text : " He grasps without limbs, hears without ears and sees without eyes,"[1] which contrasts the knowledge of the All-Self with that of the *jīva* obscured by *karma*. When this *Vēdāntic* truth is intuitively realized in religious experience, the self as a tissue of the *s'arīrin* pulsates with its life, functions through its will and throbs with its love. The fifth topic points to Brahman as the *akṣara* or the imperishable as defined in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (I. i. 5). The text refers to two kinds of knowledge, *aparavidyā* and *paravidyā* and prefers the latter as the higher kind of knowledge which consists in the immediate apprehension of Brahman as a supra-relational experience. The *Upaniṣad* concludes that Brahman is the imperishable Highest Self which is higher than the aggregate of individual *jīvas* which are themselves higher than the unevolved subtle elements. Brahman as the true of the true is higher than the *jīva* on account of distinction and difference or *vis'ēṣaṇa* and *guṇa*, while the *jīva* is itself higher than *acit* ; this comparison relates to valuation and not sublation. The *Advaitic* theory of the absolute admitting of three kinds of reality or degrees of truth is not tenable. The absolute does

[1] apāṇipādō javanō grahitā pas'yatyacakṣus sa s'ṛṇōtyakarnaḥ I
—*Sv. Up.*, III. 19.

not admit of kinds of reality, as reality is secondless. It does not admit of degrees of truth, as there can be no passage from degrees of truth to absolute truth. The real difference is not between existence and reality based on the criterion of non-contradiction but is between existence and value based on the principle of preference. There are stages in valuation from the sensuous side to the spiritual and to the religious consciousness. In its *anubhava* aspect, the *Brahma Vidyā* directs the aspirant to the practice of *bhakti* and *prapatti* as the supreme means of attaining oneness with Brahman or *sāṃyaṃ*. Brahman is identical with Vāsudēva who resides in all and from whom all derive their being and also *Bhagavān* with the six perfections comprising *jñāna*, *bala*, *ais'varya*, *vīrya*, *s'akti* and *tējas*. *Sāṃya* consists in attaining the likeness of *Bhagavān*. Spiritual and divine consciousness are similar in content but not identical in existence. The next topic is the *Vais'vānara Vidyā* of the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* (V. xi, *et seq.*) defining the meditation on Brahman as the *Vais'vānara* self having the three worlds for His body. Though Brahman is *niravayava* or formless, He is meditated upon in the form of a person; the Heavens are meditated upon as identical with the head of the highest Self, and the earth is meditated upon as constituting the feet of the Self. The cosmic consciousness of *vis'varūpa* was divinely granted to Arjuna and he was so dazzled by its sublimity that he longed for the human form on account of its easy accessibility for devotion. In the *Vais'vānara Vidyā*, the human form is infinitized and adored as the living symbol of the cosmic form and consciousness. The essential idea of *bhakti* is to intuit the infinite as the meaning and goal of the finite and thus enable the seeker after God to attain the world of Brahman. In this way, the *Sūtrakāra* establishes in the six *adhikaraṇas*

of the second part of the first chapter, that Brahman is the All-Self, the inner ruler of all *jīvas*, the infinite in the finite in the cave of the human heart, the source of its vision and the Supreme Self which is higher than the highest, and experiences these philosophic truths as spiritual excellences of Brahman.

The third part of the first chapter is devoted to the exposition of the truth that Brahman and not the finite self is the subject of enquiry in some other doubtful *Upaniṣadic* texts. The first topic establishes the conclusion that the Being described in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* as the warp and woof of earth and heaven is the highest Self as the *s'arīrin* and not the *jīva*. " Him in whom heaven and earth, the mind and the vital airs are woven, know Him alone as the Self. He is the bund or *sētu* of the immortal."[1] It is an unfair criticism to say that Rāmānuja's view of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of all makes the soul of God the efficient cause and His body the material cause, and is like taking half a fowl for cooking and leaving the other half to lay eggs. This view misses the inner meaning of the *Upaniṣad* which expounds the nature of Brahman as the creator of the process of nature for the progress and perfection of the finite self. The relation of the finite to the infinite is really the crux of monism, and it cannot be solved by the crude pantheism that all is Brahman or by the acosmism of the illusion theory. The view that the absolute is an arithmetical whole, an organic unity or a concrete universal may have some affinity to the theory of *bhēdābhēda*, but has no relation to Rāmānuja's theory of the *s'arīrin*, as this is only an analogical way of bringing out the spiritual intimacy between the finite and the infinite as *jīvātman* and *Paramātman*. *Paramātman* as the inner self

[1] *Muṇḍ. Up.*, II. ii. 5.

of the *jīva* enters into the warp and woof of the world process with a view to spiritualizing the *jīva* and finally Brahmanizing it. This includes logical immanence and spiritual transcendence. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* accepts the reality of all things and thinking beings but insists on a sense of proportion and distinguishes between the demands of the logical intellect for unity and the spiritual needs of union with Brahman. Brahman as the immanent ground of existence is the goal of transcendent experience. To dissect Brahman into two halves in the manner of cutting a fowl is to dissect life into dead bits. Mathematics has no place in mystic intuition. The *Upa-niṣadic* analogy of the two birds on the same tree, of the shining one above and the suffering one below, becoming united in the end is more sublime and more appropriate than that of the fowl and its two halves. The infinite is in the finite self with a view to infinitizing its content. The *Upaniṣad* defines Brahman as the abode of the universe and the bund of the immortal. The metaphysician who thinks of Brahman in the universe becomes the *mumukṣu* who seeks the same Brahman beyond it. Therefore, in the *anubhava* stage, the arithmetical idea of the whole, the biological idea of the organism and the metaphysical view of a self or of a system give place to the mystic consciousness of God or *brahmadṛṣṭi* and attaining the world beyond, of Brahman or *Īs'a*. Even as the waters of the Ganges lose themselves in the sea, the finite self flows into Brahman by divesting itself of the differen-tiations of a name and form due to *karma* aud becoming one with Brahman by losing its separatist self-feeling, but not its self-existence.

The second topic declares that the infinite or the *bhūman* referred to in Chapter VII. xxiv. 1 of the *Chāndōgya*

Upaniṣad, beyond which there is nothing to be known is Brahman who is absolutely blissful. The *Upaniṣad* defines it thus: " Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, knows nothing else, that is Bhūman, the infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else, knows something else, then that is *alpa*, the small." The *Upaniṣad* affirms that we can know Brahman, the absolute, and hope for its immortal bliss as the most beneficial end of life, and it leads the *mumukṣu* step by step from " naming " up to " hoping " and concludes that the *ativādin* who seeks the more in the universe ends with the meditation on Bhūman as the supremely beneficial aim of life. Brahman is infinite bliss and when the devotee intuits Brahman as immanent in all beings, he does not see anything apart from Him and therefore experiences infinite bliss. The pleasures of the senses and the happiness of the cultured mind are only partial expressions of the bliss of Brahman. The world of phenomenal experience is essentially blissful as it is pervaded by the *bhūman*; but the finite self affected by *avidyā* in the form of *karma* has a fragmentary view of the world as, owing to its distorted vision, it sees apart from Brahman, and suffers from the sorrows of the divided consciousness. But the seer who has *brahmadṛṣṭi* or the intuition of the All-Self is immersed in the bliss of the *bhūman*. He revels in the Self and enjoys the universe as His *ais'varya* or wealth. The finite self connotes Brahman as its true self and this meditation on the *bhūman* leads to the attainment of *brahmānanda*. Thus the philosophic knowledge of the *Bhūma Vidyā* leads to the mystic experience of the bliss of the *bhūman*.

The third topic treats of the *Akṣara Vidyā* in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III. viii. 8-11) : " The *akṣara* is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long ; it is without colour or

shadow, without inside or outside; it eats none and none eats it. . . . . In that imperishable or *akṣara* the ether is woven, warp and woof." The author of the *Sūtras* rejects the *prima facie* view that the imperishable referred to is *pradhāna* or the *jīva*. While the previous meditations contemplate Brahman as the creator, destroyer and inner ruler of the universe, the *Akṣara Vidyā* concerns itself with Brahman as its sustainer or support. It is the will or *pras'āsana* of *Is'vara* that controls the wheel of time, the uniform behaviour of the sun, the moon and the stars and thus sustains the physical and moral life of all *jīvas*. This theory therefore rejects materialism as well as monadism and establishes the *Upaniṣadic* truth that Brahman alone is the Imperishable Law-giver and Sustainer. " That imperishable is unseen but seeing, unheard but hearing, unthought but thinking. There is nothing else that sees, hears or thinks thus but it. In that Imperishable, the ether is woven, warp and woof." This description of the *akṣara* as the All-Self excludes the *jīva* and the text therefore clearly states that Brahman is the sustainer of all beings. From the point of view of spiritual experience or *anubhava*, the *Vidyā* inculcates the worship of Brahman as the cosmic ruler or the father of all *jīvas*. The instinct of parental love, the political idea of the king and the state as the protector of the life and welfare of the subjects and the cosmic guardianship of the Manus and gods are very partial expressions of the divine will to support and sustain the world of *cit* and *acit*. The Father of all is not only in heaven, but is the inner Ruler, and His redemptive will is self-revealed both on earth and in heaven.

The key to a clear understanding of all the *Upaniṣadic* texts is furnished by the fourth topic of this part which refers

to "He" or Brahman as the object of the highest intuition.[1] Brahman as the *sat* is not the 'that' or reality beyond the 'what' or idea, as such dialectic enquiry ends in ultimate doubts. Nor is it true to say that *Vēdānta* has an idealistic foundation in self-consciousness as every idealism drifts towards subjectivism. The word 'He' remedies the defects of scepticism and solipsism and also rules out the reference to the collective self or *kārya* Brahman which is only a glorfied but *karma*-ridden *jīva*. 'He' alone is to be meditated on and not the 'I' as the latter may lead in *Vēdāntic* practice to the pitfalls of subjectivism. From the *anubhava* aspect, Brahman is higher than the highest in a world beyond the terrestrial and the celestial worlds and is alone the object of apprehension and attainment. *Paramapada* or the supreme abode transcends the sphere of *karma*, and the *mukta* enjoys the ecstasy of the intuition of Brahman in the world beyond.

The subject of enquiry in the fifth topic is the *Dahara Vidyā* of the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* (VIII) which enjoins the meditation on the 'ether of the heart which is the city of Brahman.' The *Upaniṣad* directs us to look within and seek for the subtle ether or *daharākās'a* in the lotus heart which is the city of God or *Brahmapuri*. The *adhikaraṇa*, by a process of elimination, excludes the two alternatives of the elemental ether and the spiritual entity being the objects of the prescribed meditation and concludes that the ether in the heart refers to the highest Brahman. The *Upaniṣad* ascribes to it eight perfections which imply freedom from evil in its physical, moral and metaphysical aspects in the well-known passage: "The self is free from

[1] sa pāpmanā vinirmuktaḥ sa sāmabhir unnīyatē brahmalōkam sa ētasmāj jīvaghanāt parātparam puris'ayam puruṣam ikṣate.—*Pr. Up.*, V. 15. Īkṣati karmavyapadēs'āt saḥ.—*Ve. Su.* I. iii. 13.

evil, old age, grief, hunger, thirst and death and its wishes are immediately self-realized."[1] To distinguish it from the freed self which has the same qualities, the *Upaniṣad* declares that the subtle ether contains both heaven and earth within it and is the abode of the whole universe; it is the Brahman who dwells in the self and rules it and whom the self does not know.[2] Self-knowledge is essential to the meditation on Brahman and therefore the *Upaniṣad* requires the *mumukṣu* to realize his true *ātman* as different from the empirical *jīva* in the three states of waking, dream and dreamlessness. While the *ātman* is finite, Brahman is infinite and omnipotent. The predication of will to Brahman is in no sense a bar to His infinity, as He is absolutely free from the self-contradictions of the finite-infinite and even from a shadow of the imperfections of *karma* and *puṇya-pāpa*. Omnipotence is expressed in the absoluteness of His mercy. Out of His boundless love, *Īs'vara* sets aside His supreme glory and becomes easy of access to all *jīvas* by entering into their hearts. Within every *jīva* is hidden in the *Brahmapuri* the rich treasure of absolute truth, goodness and beauty. Blinded by *karma*, the finite self is unable to discover it. When the self is morally cleansed, it intuits itself, becomes serene and radiant with *bhakti* and reaches the resplendent region of everlasting bliss with the saving grace of its inner light.

The next topic is the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* texts (II. iv. 12-13 and II. vi. 17) treating of the person of the size of the thumb standing in the middle of the self. The *Sūtras* state that the expression refers to the Supreme Self and not to the *jīva*, since the lordship or *Is'varatva* referred to in the context would

[1] ēṣa ātmā apahatapāpmā vijarō vimṛtyur vis'ōkō vijighatsō apipāsas satyakāmas satyasaṅkalpaḥ.—*Ch. Up.*, VIII. i. 5.
[2] *Ch. Up.*, VIII. i. 3.

apply only to *Īs'vara* and not to the *jīva*. The *Upaniṣad* (II. vi. 2-3) also declares that the whole universe is a cosmos and not chaos and its uniformity is not mechanical but is ordained by a being of infinite might and benevolence for fear of whom the sun shines, fire burns and the wind blows. The *Upaniṣad* enshrines the truth that Brahman rules the world from within and is the ultimate reason for the laws of thought and nature and is yet transcendental in His glory. Brahman transcends the limitations of *prakṛti* and the *jīva* and is therefore *nirguṇa* and *niravayava*. None of the categories of space, time and causality which have a phenomenal use are adequate to describe the noumenal self. But the measureless enters into the world of space-time without losing its infinity for the purpose of meditation by the *mumukṣu*. In His infinite mercy the Lord of love seeks the sinning self and dwells in its body in spite of its filthiness with a view to redeeming it from its sinful career.[1] The last topic of the section is the *Chāndōgya* text (VIII. xiv. 1) that speaks of ether as the evolver of names and forms. This ether is not the elemental ether or *ākās'a* or the *jīva* but is Brahman. This is clear from the description given that He is the Lord of lords who rules the self even in the state of deep sleep. The thirty-two *Vidyās* expounded in the *Upaniṣads* are meditations on Brahman with the essential qualities of *satya*, *jñāna*, *ānanda*, *ananta* and *amala* and they all point to the realization of Brahman as the *summum bonum* of life. It is thus shown that the 'logical' Highest of what may be called 'The Pure *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*' of the *Sūtras* is also the 'Intuitional Highest of the Practical *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*' of the *Bhagavad Viṣaya*. The next section shows the identity of the Intuitional Highest with the logical

[1] daharakuharē dēvastiṣṭhan niṣadhvaradīrghikā nipatitanijāpatyāditsāvatīrṇapitṛkramāt |—*Rahasyatraya Sāra*, Chap. X.

Highest and thus justifies the view that *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is *Ubhaya Vēdānta.*

SECTION II. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE "BHAGAVAD VIṢAYA"

Vis'iṣṭadvaita as a philosophy of religion not only interprets metaphysics in terms of religion and religion in terms of metaphysics, but equates the two by the common designation *dars'ana.* The term *dars'ana* connotes a philosophical system as well as a spiritual perception of reality and may be explained as an integral intuition of Brahman. The metaphysician thinks God's thoughts after Him and has a soul-sight of God as his very self. The *ṛṣis* and the *Āḷvārs* realized the existence of Brahman by directly experiencing Him and thus proved the truth that Brahman is the intuitional as well as the philosophical Highest. Their *anubhava* is justified by philosophic thinking. In extreme monism, Brahman is *jñāna* and is realized by *jñāna*; extreme theism distrusts the intellect and relies on scriptural faith. But in *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* Brahman can be enquired into as well as experienced. Conceptual knowledge of God is exalted by the soul-sense of God, and the soul-sight of God is rationalized by conceptual knowledge. *Jñāna* is inspired by *bhakti* and *bhakti* is illumined by *jñāna* and the two together constitute *bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna.* Thought melts into feeling and is verified by it, and feeling is illumined by thought and justified by it. This truth is well established by Rāmānuja as the philosopher-saint who integrated the experiences of the *ṛṣis* and the *Āḷvārs* and expounded them as one single coherent whole called *Ubhaya Vēdānta.* As a philosopher-saint he established the truths of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as embodied in the *Vēdānta Sūtras* and at the same time thought

of each *adhikaraṇa* as a *Brahmānubhava* or experience of the Brahman. As a saint-philosopher he intuited the truths of *Tiruvāimoḷi* and gave a critical exposition of the experiences of the *Āḷvārs* by showing their logical coherence. As a saint, he contacted God and as a philosopher he proved the truths of spiritual experience.

The *Bhagavad Viṣaya* is the logical exposition of the spiritual experiences of Nammāḷvār just as the *S'rī Bhāṣya* sums up the varieties of *Vēdāntic* experience systematized in the *Sūtras*. The method in both is the same, though the former stresses the inductive side and the latter the deductive side. The entire system is explained in a twofold way as *tattva-hita-puruṣārtha* and *arthapañcaka*. The first of these can be explained as the co-ordination of the metaphysical, moral and religious aspects of experience, *tattva*, *hita* and *puruṣārtha* respectively. *Arthapañcaka* deals with the five truths of the philosophy of religion, namely, *prāpya*, *prāptā*, *upāya*, *prāptivirōdha* and *prāpti*. The metaphysics of *Vēdānta* treats of the *Upaniṣadic* way of knowing Brahman and the theoretic knowledge of Brahman as the Being that is the source of all beings. *Vēdāntic* ethics deals with the *hita* or the means of realizing the supreme *tattva* which consists in the moral and spiritual discipline of the *mumukṣu*. The *puruṣārtha* or the supreme end is the realization of Brahman and the attainment of eternal bliss in *Paramapada*. This method is elaborated in the *arthapañcaka* in a more concrete way. Brahman is the *prāpya* or the end to be spiritually apprehended and attained. The *prāptā* is the *jīva* that seeks Brahman as its *s'arīrī* or *prakārī*. *Bhakti* and *prapatti* are the *upāya* or means of attaining Brahman, by ceaseless devotion or absolute self-surrender to the Lord. The chief obstacles to be overcome or *praptivirōdha* are *avidyā-karma*,

the evils of *ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra* or the concept of 'I' and 'mine'; the realization of Brahman by ascending to His world is the *prāpti* or the highest end to be attained. The *Bhagavad Viṣaya* as well as the *Brahma Sūtras* employ the same *Vēdāntic* method, and use the same spiritual language. The first two chapters of the *Sūtras* determine the nature of the *tattva*, the third defines the *hita* and the fourth deals with the *puruṣārtha*. In the same way the first section of the *Bhagavad Viṣaya* is the meditation on the chief *tattva* or *prāpya*. The second section describes the *hita* or *upāya* and the last section the *puruṣārtha* or *prāpti*. Thus the beginning (*upakrama*) as well as the end (*upasaṃhāra*) is identical in both the systems. The end and aim of *Ubhaya Vēdānta* is summed up in the *Upaniṣad*, "He who knows Brahman attains the Highest." Just as the whole teaching of the *Sūtras* is summed up in the first four *Sūtras*, the meaning of the entire *Tiruvāimoḷi* is epitomized in the four lines of the first verse itself.

The first commentary on the *Tiruvāimoḷi* composed under Rāmānuja's direct guidance is the *Ārāyirappaḍi*. Of the later commentaries on both, "*Īḍu muppattārāyiram*" or "*Īḍu*" as it is popularly called is well known. It gives a psychological and logical account of the divine life of the *Āḷvār* and traces the stages by which he realized Brahman and enjoyed the bliss of eternal *kaiṅkarya* to Him. In the four works, the *Tiruviruttam*, the *Tiruvās'iriyam*, the *Peria tiruvandādi* and the *Tiruvāimoḷi*, the *Āḷvār* describes the way in which he renounced worldliness, was drawn by the entrancing Beauty of the Lord and was caught up in the flaming love of Beauty. The *Tiruvāimoḷi* expounds the art of divine life and love which consists in the descent of God into the self of the *Āḷvār*, and the ascent of the *Āḷvār* to His divine Home.

Judged from this standpoint, the spiritual experiences of the *Āḷvār* show how the grace of God transforms the *Āḷvār* into a *mukta* and through him the whole of humanity. The first section of a hundred hymns insists on *kaiṅkarya* to God as the chief end of life. *Bhagavān* is the Supreme Lord who is ever adorable, accessible, holy and blissful and the saviour of all. The second analyses *kaiṅkarya* and concludes that *kaiṅkarya* is only for His satisfaction, without any taint of egoism. In the third stage, *kaiṅkarya* has an extended meaning as it finds its completion in *Bhāgavata kaiṅkarya* or service to all godly men, irrespective of their birth or status. The fourth part traces the way in which the obstacles to divine life, like the temptations of *ais'varya* and *kaivalya*, are surmounted. The fifth is justification by the faith that the Lord Himself removes these hindrances. The sixth section is an important stage in spiritual life as it defines *prapatti* as the only way to God and the whole attitude of devotion is consummated in *prapatti*. But *mukti* is not yet in sight in spite of *prapatti* and the *Āḷvar* portrays his feeling of dejection in the seventh section. The eighth is an account of the purificatory value of such disappointment as it leads to further self-naughting and introversion, and increases the hunger of God. Dejection is soon transfigured into hope and it makes love an irrepressible longing. The tenth section is a glowing account of the glorious ascent of the *Aḷvār* to his divine home and the attainment of the bliss of Brahman having its fruition in *kaiṅkarya*.

Vēdānta Dēs'ika who was a specialist in *Upaniṣadic* knowledge was so deeply influenced by the soul-stirring outpourings of Nammāḷvār that he styled them as *Dramiḍōpaniṣad* and even preferred them in some respects to the *Upaniṣads*, owing to their direct spiritual appeal. The

Tiruvāimoḷi as *Vēdāntic* experience has more value to the *mumukṣu* than mere metaphysical exposition. This truth is well brought out in the definition of the nature of Brahman in the *Brahma Sūtras* and in the *Tiruvāimoḷi*. While the former starts with the definition of Brahman as the cosmic ground, the latter begins straightway with the description of Brahman as beautiful and blissful, and these qualities have more value to the seeker of Brahman than the cosmological idea. *Upaniṣadic Vēdānta* is the enquiry into Brahman as the first cause with a view to knowing Him as the final cause and the goal of life ; but in *Dramiḍa Vēdānta*, the experience of Brahman is the primary aim, and the metaphysical view is deduced from it. It is in the light of this immediate intuition of Brahman that Vēdānta Dēs'ika expounds the meaning and value of the religion of *Āḷvār* and extols it as the *Dramiḍōpaniṣad*. The whole teaching of the *Tiruvāimoḷi* is summarized by Vēdānta Dēs'ika in his *Dramiḍōpaniṣat Sāram* and *Dramiḍōpaniṣat Tātparya Ratnāvaḷī*. The first section of the *Tiruvāimoḷi* consisting of the first hundred verses defines Brahman as the supreme Self that alone is adorable and attainable. What is adorable is also blissful, and the second section or hundred therefore further characterizes Him as the Blissful. The Beautiful can never be formless or *niravayava* and the third hundred describes Him as having an *aprākṛta* form of bewitching beauty. But such beauty and love may also induce the devotee of God to seek the hedonistic pleasures of *ais'varya* or the spiritual joys of *kaivalya*. As they have no charm for the *Āḷvār*, he as a *jñanī* seeks Him in the next two sections of the *Tiruvāimoḷi* as the supreme end of life as well as the giver of that good. By stripping himself of *ahaṅkāra* and with his faith in the saving grace of the Redeemer, the *Āḷvār* in the sixth section practises *prapatti*. Finding that his *prapatti* bears no fruit, he at first thinks of the

cruelty of God in subjecting him to further hardships in the world of *saṃsāra*, but very soon, in the course of the next section, the assured faith, that the Lord is the saviour of all who are heavily laden and afflicted, asserts itself. The eighth section describes the redemptive love of God who is drawn by love and dwells for ever in the heart of devotees with a view to saving them from sin and requires of them nothing more than a change of heart. The ninth gives the final definition of God as the eternal friend and companion of the *mumukṣu* and the tenth and last hundred marks the completion of the spiritual progress of the *Āḻvār* and the attainment by him of the eternal bliss of Brahman in *Vaikuṇṭha*. In this way the *Tiruvāimoḻi* teaches the truth that *Bhagavān* is Himself the *prāpaka* and the *prāpya*, the *upāya* and the *upēya*.[1]

The first *Ṭiruvaimoḻi* consisting of ten verses sums up the teaching of the whole work and is a typical philosophic poem setting forth the essentials of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. The first verse defines the nature of the Brahman as *saguṇa* with transcendental bliss (*uyarnalam*) as the essential quality and with a beauteous form of His own. The second states that He is different from *cit* and *acit* and has a self-luminous nature of His own. The two thus refute the view that Brahman is *nirguṇa* and *niravayava* and conclude that Brahman is *jīva-vis'iṣṭa Paramātman*. The third stresses the immanence of Brahman in all sentient and non-sentient beings and affirms the intimacy between the *ātman* and *Paramātman*. The universe without this underlying unity would become a

[1] Ittham sēvyaṃ subhōgyaṃ s'ubhasubhagatanuṃ sarva bhōgya prakṛṣṭhaṃ,
s'rēyastaddhētubhūtaṃ prapadanasulabham svās'ritāniṣthajiṣṇum |
bhaktaccandānuraktam nirupadhisuhṛdam sat padavyāṃ sahāyam
dēvas' s'rīman svasiddēh karanamiti vadannēkam artham sahasrē, ||
s'ēvyatvādīn das'ārthān pṛthag iha s'atakair vakti tatsthāpanārṭhaṃ |

multi-verse or chaos. All beings with their infinite variations have their source in Brahman and their functions are centrally controlled by Him and yet Brahman is beyond. These verses repudiate pluralism and monadism as well as pantheism. The ninth and the tenth verses are directed against the *s'ūnya-vādins* who deny everything. Denial has its function in reality and cannot be of reality and every denial presupposes an affirmation. Existence is implied even in the denial of all existence. But the most important verse is the seventh as it is the coping stone of the whole system. The truths of transcendence and immanence are explained in the light of *sarīrātmabhāva* and *Bhagavān* is described as the *s'arīrin* that sustains and controls *cit* and *acit.*[1] They have no existence apart from Brahman and they are only for His satisfaction. Brahman is the *dhāraka, niyāmaka* and *s'ēṣī* of both *cit* and *acit.* The *ātman* pervades the self as its *sarīrī* and is therefore accessible to it and attainable by it. Thus in this first *Tiruvāimoḷi* Nammāḷvār summarizes the teaching of the thousand verses and the truths of the *S'ārīraka S'āstra.*

The opening verse itself strikes the keynote of the whole philosophy of the *Tiruvaimoḷi* and by knowing it, the meaning of the whole can be known. It gives in a nutshell the central truth of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* in the light of the traditional method of *tattva, hita* and *puruṣārtha* and the fivefold method of *arthapañcaka.* The term *uyarnalam* in the first line defines the supreme *tattva* or *prāpya* as Brahman the absolutely Blissful in the manner of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad.* The *hita* or *upāya* by which *Bhagavān* is attained is indicated by the very suggestive term in the second line, namely, *matinalam* or *bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna* or intellectual love of God. When

[1] udal mis'ai uyirenak karandu eṅgum paranduḷan,—verse 7.

jñāna is exalted by *bhakti* and *bhakti* is lighted up by *jñana*, the two are glued together as a single unity and their full significance is brought out by the term *toḷudu* indicating absolute self-surrender to the *rakṣaka*. Really He is Himself the *upāya* and the *upēya*. The *mumukṣu* is blessed with *mukti* and is no longer subject to the ills of *saṃsāra* as pointed out by the term *tuyararu*. Brahman who is perfect (*pūrṇa*) makes the *jīva* perfect. The true idealistic method of *Vēdānta* is its philosophic passion for unity and simplicity. " To idealize is to essentialize." Knowledge according to all schools is epitomized in the word of truth known as the *praṇava* which is made up of the three initial letters of the first three lines of the first verse. In this way the expounders of *Ubhaya Vēdānta* establish the truth of the synthetic philosophy of Rāmānuja that the aim of the *S'rī Bhāṣya* and the *Bhagavad Viṣaya* is identical, that the foundation of the *Brahma Sūtras* is the intuition of the seers of Brahman, and that the intuition of the *Āḷvārs* falls into line with the system of *Vēdānta*.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MYSTICISM OF *VIS'IṢṬADVAITA*

EACH philosophy or school of thought—eastern or western—has its own mystics in whose lives and utterances the system finds support and verification. But it is not every system that can claim mysticism as an appropriate branch of its tenets or doctrines. Though mysticism has now been given a high rank in some philosophic treatises and in spite of there being several treatises written on mysticism itself as a separate subject, its true meaning is still shrouded in mystery. It is the purpose of this chapter to obtain a clear notion of what true mysticism is, and to demonstrate how *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* alone, among all the schools of philosophic thought, is an appropriate and fit system for mysticism to flourish in. What is mysticism ? One can easily start by pointing out what mysticism is not. It is not magic, mystery-mongering or *siddhi*-seeking. It is entirely different from occultism and spiritualism, and from psycho-analysis and the experiences of subliminal consciousness. The true mystic rejects the values of supernatural powers and *yōgic siddhis* as he seeks God and only God. Visions and voices, photisms, auditions and automatisms may simulate spiritual experience but they do not lead to God ; rather they lead away from Him. William James has proved conclusively the theory that mystic experience is not the aberration of a diseased mind as explained by the medical materialist, but is a genuine

experience of God, which illumines the intellect, purifies the will and exalts the feeling. To identify mysticism with feeling is to ignore its supersensuous and supra-rational character. While sense-experience is fragmentary or is merely sentience below the level of relational experience, inference is mediate. The intuitive insight of the mystic is immediate and ineffable. God is intuited and not inferred, and He can be contacted directly though He cannot be categorized. But the intuition of God is not mere feeling or emotion. The view that it leads to emotionalism and erotism and is bereft of the sanity and serenity of the *jñānī* mistakes the dynamic flow of spirituality or God-intoxication for sensual revelry and narcotic excesses.

Vēdāntic anubhava or experience does not mean the 'feelings and acts of individuals in their solitude so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.' It is the integral experience of the whole *ātman* and not of its sectional states. The subjective feeling has its foundation in the impersonal truths of *s'āstraic* revelation and is not a mere psychological experience. The word intuition is often so vaguely and loosely employed that it may mean any state of consciousness, from mere feeling or sentient experience which is below the level of relational thought, to supra-sensuous and supra-rational states above relational consciousness. It is too vague for clear understanding and is therefore without definite significance. It should not be confused with the immediacy of sense-experience as it is supra-mental, nor is it intellectual love as it transcends the limitations of *tarka* or the logical intellect. While the knowledge given in sense-perception is fragmentary and inferential knowledge is mediate, intuitional insight is an immediate experience of Brahman. Intuition reaches the

heart of reality and carries deeper conviction than *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*, or sense perception and inference. Brahman is directly intuited by the divine eye granted to the *freed* self and is not logically proved. The view that *saguṇa* Brahman is the logical highest creates a dualism between thought and intuition, and is not consistent with the facts of mystic experience and scriptural integrity. The experience of Brahman or *brahmānubhava* is unaware of the antithesis between thought and reality, or that between the *what* and the *that*, as it is the direct apprehension of the *svarūpa* or form of Brahman and the comprehension of its character or *guṇa*. The term *brahmānubhava* is, on the whole, preferable to the terms mysticism and intuition, owing to the definite meaning fixed by tradition and the recorded experiences of *ṛṣis* and *Āḷvārs*.

The *mumukṣu* as a mystic has an organic craving[1] for Brahman and he longs for love or *bhakti*[2] and not merely for the negative state of *mukti* or freedom from the sorrows of *saṃsāra*. Even the infinite glory of *Vaikuṇṭha* has no attraction or value for him[3] if it be merely an escape from *saṃsāra* without contacting God and enjoying the bliss of communion with Him here and in this life. The mystic has the instinct for the infinite and to him the best proof of the existence of Brahman is the immediate experience of Brahman, a soul-sight of the Self here and now, and a revelling in His love. With his genius for God, the *bhakta* has no use for soulless ritualism and arid dialectics; a famine-stricken ryot who longs for rainfall is not satisfied with the weather

[1] *Tiruvāimoli*, III, viii.

[2] Ālavandār, *Stōtra-Ratna*, 54.

[3] Vēdānta Dēs'ika, *Varadarāja Pañcās'at*, 49.

chart. The intuition of Brahman consists in the *bhakta* crossing the frontiers of dialectic and divided thinking, and in losing himself in the immensity of the integral experience. The experience of God is the finite-infinite relation of love, which on the divine side is the invasion of love into the heart of the finite self, and on the human side is an intellectual love of God known as *bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna* or in Tamil *mati-nalam*. *Bhakti* is the thought of God touched by feeling and turned into devotion. *Jñāna* deepens into *bhakti* and *bhakti* is exalted by *jñāna*; and the two are fused together as *prēmā*. While philosophy seeks the unity of reality, and religion refers to the union of the *jīva* with Brahman, mysticism expresses the intense yearning, or *avā*, hunger for the Absolute which is the fusion of *jñāna* and *bhakti*. *Jñāna* and *bhakti* can be distinguished but cannot be divided; and the two together find their consummation in divine love, which in its highest stages bursts the bounds of artificial restraint aud becomes a deluge of ecstasy. Intense love towards God or *pēravā* is the consummation of thought and the exaltation of feeling; and the charges of intellectualism and sentimentalism cannot apply to a spiritual state which is more than thought and feeling. Mysticism as the experience of God-intoxication cannot fully thrive in the theistic atmosphere of absolute difference between the omnipotence of the creator and the impotence of the creature, nor in the rarified region of pure consciousness devoid of content. The mystic delights in communion with God, and not in the surrender of will, or in the negation of thought.

The various stages by which the logical ego, as a *vis'ēṣaṇa* of Brahman, gradually evolves into the mystic, thirsting for God, is worthy of restatement. The metaphysically-minded

Vis'iṣṭādvaitin thinks of the *jīva* as the adjective or element of the Absolute or Brahman, deriving its life from the whole. As a moralist or ethical ego, the *jīva* is not a *vis'ēṣaṇa* but a person depending on the redemptive will of *Īs'vara* as the cosmic Ruler or *s'ēṣī*. When the ethical ego is drawn by the beauteous form of *Bhagavān*, it changes into the aesthetic self and the *s'ēṣī* becomes *sundara*. The self then is stripped of *ahaṅkāra* and becomes the *s'arīra* of the All-Self. As a *bhakta* he longs for the love of *Bhagavān* and as a *prapanna* he surrenders his will absolutely to the *Rakṣaka* and effaces himself in *kaiṅkarya*. When love generated in *bhakti* and *prapatti* becomes a longing, the *bhakta* or *prapanna* pants for God and pines away. The soul-hunger of God is equally intense and the *prakārin* becomes a *prakāra* longing for communion with the *jīva* as His very self or *ātman*. The relation between the two is changed from the logical, the ethical, the aesthetic and the religious into the mystic love between the lover and the beloved, and it is the aim of *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* mysticism to reach the heart of love and to feel directly its inner pulsations.

The *Vēdāntic* theory of *Brahmajñāna* may be reinterpreted and summarized in the light of the mystic experience of Brahman as alogical, amoral and supra-personal. The intuition of the mystic as *ṛṣi* or *Āḷvār* is alogical in the sense that it is the completion of the logical realm and not its sublation. After a laborious discipline in the exercise of the logical intellect, there comes a stage in the spiritual life of the seeker when he sees truth, as it were, in a flash. Truth possesses him, so to say, and the tools of knowledge are used only to explain the intuitive experience. Intuition is the immediate or direct experience of Brahman, but it presupposes

strenuous intellectual discipline acquired in the lower realms of knowledge. The knowledge given in sense perception should be clear, precise and free from bias. But even so, it is piecemeal and not capable of scientific explanation in terms of cause and effect. In the next higher stage, the particulars of sense are systematically explained as elements of an inter-related unity. Philosophy is thinking things together in their wholeness with a view to discovering their underlying unity. But even philosophic knowledge is fragmentary and abstract, as its account of reality is purely conceptual. Philosophical systems are conflicting and contradictory and have no finality. It is only when philosophic thinking which works with limited categories is perfected in mystic insight that the riddles of reason can be solved. Then intellect is illumined by divine vision and melts into ecstasy. The mystic *anubhava* of Brahman is not sentient or infra-rational experience, but is supra-rational and is the crown and completion of the different realms of knowledge given in sense-perception, science and philosophy. Mystic experience is not mere feeling or thought, but is an integral experience which includes both these elements and transcends their limitations. The view that *Vaiṣṇavism* encourages emotionalism and erotism and fosters in man the soft passivity of the feminine nature ignores the value of *jñāna* and *bhakti* as stepping stones to *mukti* and not as stopping places. When the devout seeker subdues the emotions in the light of reason, emotion and intellect become one. Love is for love's sake and it knows no fear and seeks no favour. God is the Lord of love and every *jīva* has a humane nature nurtured by love and the restless adventure of love's game goes on till the two—the lover and the beloved—are united for ever. The bliss of such union is not the result of emotionalism and is entirely free from the taint of

sensuality and sin. It also transcends the limits of philosophic thinking as thought expires in enjoyment. Intuition or *tattva dars'ana* is the consummation of the logical intellect or *tarka dṛṣṭi*. The mystic experience of Brahman is full, perfect and free from the limitations of intellectualism and is therefore alogical.

The criticism that *Vēdāntic* mysticism does not promote the ends of individual and social morality but encourages inertia and passivity cannot apply to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. It is not a world-denying religion which favours the unhealthy ascetic view that life is rather to be shunned than lived. The mystic hungers and thirsts for God, feels the life of God in the depths of his being and is absorbed in ecstasy. He shakes off the ego-centric standpoint and self-centredness and surrenders himself to the Absolute. Mystic life is enriched by self-surrender as it enhances personal worth by partaking in the riches of the divine life. The self dies to live and it is deified by contacting God and entering into eternity. Its other-worldly attitude evolves from life here and now and is not a revolutionary change from illusoriness to enlightenment. The mystic realizes that he is only an instrument of the divine will and the basis of all his activity is shifted to God as the All-Self and Cosmic Actor (*kṛtsnavit* and *kṛtsnakṛt*). By attuning himself to the will of God and thus becoming one with Him, the mystic transcends the individualistic standpoint and the moral distinctions of good and bad or *puṇya* and *pāpa*. His life is supra-moral in the sense that it is the crown and completion of the moral life. God is absolutely good and is not morally indifferent, and the chief quality of God is transmitting His godliness to His *other* and making him perfect. Saintliness and unrighteousness can never co-exist. Personal worth is

enhanced by self-effacement and self-gift. When the lower self of *ahaṅkāra* is renounced, the *ātman* is deified and its highest values of truth, goodness and beauty are conserved. It then sheds its exclusive feeling and realizes the unitive consciousness. The mystic reaches the heights of moral and spiritual consciousness, partakes of the riches of divine experience and sees all beings in God and God in all beings. On the moral level there is progress towards ideals, but in mystic or amoral experience aspiration is crowned with achievement. Morality is at best a struggle to reach the ideal of goodness. But there comes a stage in the spiritual life of the aspirant when he has no longer to seek the good but becomes goodness itself. Thus the amoral is the fulfilment of the moral life and not its negation. *Vīs'iṣṭādvaita* does not encourage the method of self-extinction ending in the stirless rest of *nīrvāṇa*, but insists on spiritual activism and the fulness and freedom of deified consciousness. Spirituality is perfected in service, and mystics like *Nammāḷvar* and Prahlāda work ceaselessly for the welfare of all beings till they attain a direct realization of Brahman.

The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* philosophy of love is enshrined in the *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which says that a husband is dear not for the love of the husband but for the love of the Self. An object is dear to one's self not for its own sake, but for the love of the Self. Maitreyī renounces wealth and other earthly possessions and seeks immortality, and the sage Yājñavalkya, her husband, intimates to her that the only means of obtaining immortal love is the knowledge of the Supreme Self. Brahman is perfectly blissful and imparts its bliss to different beings according to their *karma*. Human love is a perishing

feeling, but is a fractional expression of the infinite love of God. Love of home, love of country and love of humanity are not to be inhibited, as they are but partial revelations of divine love. *Kāma* may be of three kinds, *viz.*, *viṣaya kāma*, *ātma kāma* and *Bhagavaṭ kāma*. Love or *kāma* is by itself neither good nor bad, and its value depends upon the object desired. *Viṣaya kāma* is desire for the objects of sense, and its satisfaction is momentary and fraught with pain in all its stages.[1] As the pursuit of sensual pleasure, it is an adventure which lands one finally in the wilderness of *saṃsāra*. One has then to retrace one's steps and follow the way of *ātma kāma* by self control and introversion. The joy of self-realization is enduring, but it arises from the flight of the alone to the alone, and being a state of solid singleness it is tinged with egoism. *Bhagavat kāma* or *Paramātma rāga* is love directed to the Lord who is the source and centre of all human love. When *kāma* or *rāga* is spiritualized and directed Godward, it loses its sting and is reckoned a virtue. If *kāma* as sexual feeling is not humanized, it is bestial and blind, clamant and chaotic, and becomes a deadly vice. But when it is idealized and disciplined into married love, selfishness disappears, and the fleeting voluptuousness of reckless adventure is replaced by the lasting happiness of perfect pleasure. If it is further spiritualized into divine love, it loses all traces of selfishness and becomes ethereally ennobled. *Kāma* is the urge of love. But as *Bhagavat kāma*, it is a craving for spiritual marriage with the Beloved. Love is a relation between the *ātman* and its eternal *other*, and is a longing for a communion which is not infected by self-contradiction. When it becomes an infinite longing for the Infinite, as in the case

[1] *duḥkamūla*, *duḥkamis'ra* and *duḥkhōdarka* or originating in pain, mixed with pain and causing pain.

of Maitreyī, it leads to immortal bliss. While human love is fleeting and perishing, divine love is deathless and has eternal value.

Brahmānubhava may be mystically explained by the experience of love and beauty and this experience is treasured up in the *Bhāgavata* and the *Bhagavad Viṣaya*. There aesthetic philosophy of Brahman has a soul-stirring appeal to the *mumukṣu*, an appeal which remains unsurpassed in mystic literature. To the mystic, the *tattva* is Brahman the Beautiful, the *hita* is *prēmā* and the realization of the bliss of Brahman is the *puruṣārtha*. *Prēmā* is thus the spiritual copula between the knowledge of Brahman and the realization of its bliss. The *Bhagavata* is the homeland of divine *līlā* (*prēma rasa*) and the *Tiruvāimoḷi*, the outpouring of S'aṭhakōpa, the God-intoxciated *Āḷvār*, is the spiritual biography of the eternal game of divine love. The mysticism of Nammāḷvār is the heart of *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* wisdom, and it furnishes the *raison de etre* of its metaphysics. Nammāḷvār is a seeker after Brahman and seer ; he is the prophet of universal salvation. His *Tiruvāimoḷi* begins with the definition of Brahman as bliss (I. i. 1) and ends with a glorious description of the attainment by the *Āḷvār* of that eternal bliss.

Brahman is defined philosophically as the Lord of Bliss or the aesthetic Highest, and is finally realized in *mukti* as the intuitional Highest. To the *Āḷvār*, the Absolute who is the heart of logic is also the Beautiful who satisfies the logic of the heart ; and metaphysics ends in mysticism. Brahman is *ānanda* and *rasa*. The universe has its source and sustenance only in the bliss of Brahman. It is the theatre of the *līlā* of God which aims at turning men into *muktas*. Though

love is a unitive experience, it presupposes the duality of the experiencing subjects. The *sat* without a second, as *ēkākī*, or the One that remained alone in the *praḷaya* state, was joyless, and therefore it divided itself into finite centres and loving beings and entered into them as their pervasive inner Love (*Bṛhad. Upan.*, III. iv. 3). Love does not thrive in loneliness or self-identity, as it takes two to love and be loved. Love involves otherness and even in the highest states of bliss, when the self-feeling is effaced, love is a dual relation and a double fruition. The absolute is love. Brahman, the *ēkākī* experiences creative joy by self-giving and love and becomes complete only by self-division into loving pairs. The one Self that is without a second sports as two, as the lover and the beloved, without losing His wholeness. The dialectician who sees nothing but self-contradiction in the act of creation, as it involves, according to him, the non-relational entering into relations, misses the whole point of the *Upaniṣad*. The blissful Brahman in its sportive act of love separates itself from its beloved *other*, seeks it, and then becomes one with it. The Absolute itself assumes a bewitching form of beauty in order to attract its *other* to Itself and true dialectic is this triad of love.

To the mystic, Reality is not a problem but is realization itself; and Nammāḷvār, the super-mystic of *S'ri Vaiṣṇavism*, is so deeply intoxicated by divine love that he has no other thought or feeling than that of God. Kṛṣṇa alone satisfies his organic cravings of hunger, thirst and pleasure.[1] The instinct for the Infinite alone preserves his being. The transcendental Brahman beyond the world equally seized with soul-hunger incarnates into the heart of humanity without

[1] *Tiruvāimoli*, VI. vii. 1.

abandoning His holiness and glory. This mutualness results in the game of love, a game devised by the divine Artist to transmute the *karma*-ridden *jīva* into a *mukta*. The reciprocity of love leads to irresistibility by the mystic process of *saṃs'lēṣa* alternating with *vis'lēṣa*, the systole-diastole movement of *prēṃa bhakti*. The former is the joy of contacting the entrancing beauty of *Bhuvana Sundara*, and the latter the sorrow of separation from Him. The *jñānī* turns his vision to God and focusses his love on Him as his *ātman*. God likewise longs for the *jñānī* as His *ātman*[1]. Excess of *prēmā* transforms the *jñānī* into a spiritual bride pining for her lord. The symbolism of marriage embodies the secrets of the soul's longings and its self-giving joys. In *vis'lēṣa*, each moment stretches into eternity,[2] but in *saṃs'lēs'a* eternity is crowded into a moment. In the former case the mystic pines away owing to the feeling of unrequited love and becomes pale and passive. In the latter, the soul is caught up to God and has a momentary joy of union or ecstasy. This opposition is known as the mystic paradox and its object is the transmutation of the earthly self into the godly by a process of spiritual alchemy. The like alone seeks the like; love alone calls for love. Like gold in the refiner's fire, the self is purified and deified by alternate depressions and exaltations. At one time, it is thrilled by His touches; at another, it is torn away from Him and languishes. In Mystic philosophy both are the essential elements of love and the dualism between the two is overcome by the attainment of unitive consciousness. Nammāḷvār passes through this process of *saṃs'lēṣa* and *vis'lēṣa* till he becomes one with the Beloved and enjoys the eternal bliss of such communion.

[1] *Gīta*, VII, 18.
[2] *Tiruvāimoḷi*, V. iv. 3.

In *vis'lēṣa*, the joy due to the intimate presence of the Lord and His beatific vision is swept away, and the dark night of forlornness or deprivation sets in. Sin in this state is not the violation of the divine law but the ego-centric feeling and the sense of separation from the beloved. The renouncement by the self of the 'me' and 'mine' is the *sine qua non* of spirituality; and self-love and sensuality are rooted out.[1] The spiritual quest for the Lord ripens into the mystic thirst for Him. The woes of *vis'lēṣa* experienced by Nammāḷvār and expressed through the medium of *nāyakī-nāyaka* love, or the love of the lover and his beloved, are unmatched in mystic literature for their moving power. While *saṃs'lēṣa* is the spring season when love blossoms, *vis'lēṣa* is the desolation of winter when the grace and the glow of love fade away, and life becomes dreary and desolate. It is a state of spiritual lassitude, or ennui and pallor, aroused by a sense of unworthiness, blankness and impotence, which is known in the language of mysticism as the dark night of the soul.[2] The absence of God leads to the feeling of utter emptiness and helplessness; and nothingness takes the place of the fullness of the orison of union. The self-feeling is wiped out and the *Āḷvār* drops into passivity by the growing feeling that he really has, does, and is nothing. Reaction soon sets in and passivity changes into an invasive and assaulting mood. Love takes the offensive and becomes flaming and fierce, and, in the agony of disappointment and despair, the *Āḷvār*, consumed by the intensity of his love threatens to do what is technically known in Tamil poetic convention as *maḍal ūrtal*, in which the *nāyakī* charges the

[1] nīr numadenrivai vēr mudal māittu.—*Tiru.*, I. ii. 3.

[2] ūrellām tuñji ulagellām nallirulāi
nirellānteri ōrniliravāi ninḍadal,—*Tiru.*, V. iv. 1.

truant lover with desertion, rebukes and exposes publicly his cruelty and treachery. When love's labour is lost, by not being responded to, its fierceness bursts all artificial bounds and the lover is publicly chid for his faithlessness. *Vaiṣṇavite* mysticism transforms the monistic view of *Īs'vara* as the arch-illusionist into that of the elusive enchanter of souls as *jāra cōra s'ikhāmaṇi*, the cunning and thievish Lord of Love who steals away the hearts of devotees and ravishes them out of all their feeling of fleshliness. The *Māyin* is the cunning artist who allures the self by His beauty, transfigures its lusts of the flesh into holy love, and by a strange alchemy makes it His own. The divinely made *Āḷvār* is consumed by Kṛṣṇa *prēmā* and every sense organ pants tor contacting Kṛṣṇa.[1] The medical materialist and the worldly man steeped in sensuality may ascribe this mystic genius for God to the morbidity of hysteria or psychopathic degeneration. But a drop of divine love is the only cure, the *rasāyana* (elixir) that removes the ills of *saṃsāra* ; and the *Āḷvār*, caught up in supernal love, adopts the experiential standpoint and appeals to the rationalist and the sceptic to discern the meaning of spiritual rapport with his spiritual outlook.[2]

While thus pining away, the *Āḷvār* gets a sudden glimpse of God, and feels a strange joy sweeping over him. It is but a glimpse and mental vision or trance which is physically imperceptible and lacks sensory vividness and substantiality. Unsatisfied, the *Āḷvār* yearns for the aesthetic enjoyment of his outer senses. He longs for physical contact with the divine beauty; and realizing that his vision is only a sensory image resulting from intense mono-ideistic love or *manōbhāva*, swings back to the mood of depression and relapses once again into

[1] See muḍiyāne.—*Tiru.*, III. viii. 1.
[2] yennenjināl nōkkikkāṇīr.—*Tiru.*, V. v. 2.

passivity and emptiness. Once again he reproaches his beloved with being a Brahman that simply is, but does not feel any love, and rebukes Him for His callousness and cruelty.[1] His love overflows his inner being[2] and his spiritual cry assumes cosmic dimensions and is heard even in the world beyond the sphere of *saṃsāra*.[3] The thought of oscillating between earth and heaven is deeply distressing, but earthly life with God is preferable to *Vaikuṇṭha* after life. The *Āḷvār* is caught up in the dilemma of devotion. Love yearns for physical communion here and now and longs at the same time for transcendental life. The former is eagerly desired but not desirable on account of its impermanence, and sensuous setting and content; and the latter is desirable but is not actually desired on account of its remoteness in time and space. Mystic love is tossed between the spiritual longing for release and the divine dalliance in the *līlā* of love. At one time, overpowered by the sense of forlornness, the *Āḷvār* was on the verge of suicide. But he gave up the attempt feeling that the disposal of the self belonged only to the *s'arīrin* and that he had no freedom in the matter.[4] The Lord alone is the source, sustenance and satisfaction of life (*dhāraka, pōṣaka* and *bhōgya*).[6] He alone satisfies spiritual hunger and thirst, and is the end of all hedonistic desires. The intensity of *anurāga* or love destroys the distinction and difference between the lover and the beloved, and on one occasion the *Āḷvār* imitates, like the *Gōpīs*, the ways of *Īs'vara* and experiences cosmic consciousness.[5] The anguish

[1] kaḍiyan koḍiyan.—*Tiru*.. V. iii. 5.
[2] āviyinparamalla vēṭkaiyandō.—*Tiru*., X. iii. 2.
[3] nīrāī nilanāī.—*Tiru*., VI. ix.
[4] māyum vagaiyariyēn.—*Tiru*., V. iv. 3.
[5] *Tiru*., VI. vii. I.
[6] kaḍal jñālam s'eidenum yānē yennum.—*Tiru*., V. vi. 1.

caused by *vis'lēṣa* and the pranks and freaks of the *līlā* of love at last become unbearable and the life of the *Āḷvār* from this stage till the time of final union is one long period of struggle and suffering which has no precedent in the history of mystic literature in the east or in the west.

The depressions of *vis'lēṣa* vanish with the onset of the ecstasy of the unitive consciousness. While *vis'lēṣa* provides an opportunity to the *Āḷvār* to think of the perfections of the Lord or His *kalyāṇa guṇas* and to arouse devotional ardour, *saṃs'lēṣa* is the soul-sight of His bewitching beauty followed by God-intoxication. The *Āḷvār* is allured by the Enchanter and thrilled by His touches. The unknown and invisible is now intuited as the "dark gem."[1] It may not be the integral experience of Brahman in the super-sensuous sphere of *Paramapada* but it has all the vividness of that experience owing to the perfervid nature of *prēma bhakti* or the devotion of love. The feeling of oneness with the Absolute as the Lord of love is known in mystic lore as the orison of union and it is a state of being ravished out of the fleshly feeling. Though the joy of union is ineffable and incommunicable, the outpourings of the *Āḷvār* enable the mystic philosopher to evaluate them in the light of the *Taittirīya* estimate of *ānanda*. The feeling of pleasure is aroused by the contact of the self with the objects of sense and is a trivial and transient state. Happiness is more enduring, as it is the result of an inner cultural discipline. The joy of spiritual communion is different in degree and kind from the pleasures of sensibility and the happiness of cultured life, as it is aroused centrally and not peripherally. The satisfaction of *saṃs'lēṣa* is due to the entry of

[1] Karumāṇikkam.

transcendental Beauty into one's being and the invasion of its love into every phase of one's life. To the God-intoxicated *Āḷvār*, the joy of *saṃs'lēṣa* overflows the inner springs and inundates the mind and the conative and cognitive sense organs. Rapture is the sudden onrush of joy and ectasy is the temporary suspension of the functioning of the sense organs; but in both the cases, the self-feeling is swallowed up in joy. When Beauty rushes to the embrace of the beloved, the beloved expires in the arms of ecstasy.

While the *Upaniṣad* starts with a calculus of pleasures and concludes that *Brahmānanda* transcends thought and word[1] and therefore defies definition and description, the God-intoxicated *Āḷvar* employs the term *ārāvamudu* to express the nature of Brahman as Bliss insatiable. The joy of communion with Him is never-ending; each assault of love but whets the appetite for more and is only a prelude to the next [*puṇarccikkārāccukavellām*], the self emerges from *ānanda* only to merge in it again. This fits in well with the *Upaniṣadic anubhava* according to which Brahman is *rasa* or bliss itself[2] and the self emerges from *ānanda*, is sustained by *ānanda* and merges into *ānanda*.[3] The rapture of communion overflows from the inner springs and inundates the senses, and it is therefore more delightful than all the tastes, smells and sounds which have a sensory origin. The Lord of Love seized with soul-madness enters into the whole being[4] of the *Āḷvār*, communicates His joy to it and makes it pulsate with joy. The joy of love's embrace is inescapable and irresistible

[1] Yatō vācō nivartantē aprāpya manasā saha.

[2] rasō vai saḥ.—*Taitt. Up.*. Ānand., vii.

[3] Ānandāddhyēva khalvimāni bhutani jāyantē | ānandēna jātāni jivanti | ānandam prayantyabhisam vis'antti | *Taitt Up.*, Bhṛghu, vi.

[4] Oruviḍam onrinri ennul kalandānukkē.—*Tiru.* II. v. 2.

and the *Āḷvār* is immersed in divine deliciousness and the thirst of ages is satisfied. Melting with gratitude, the *Āḷvār* offers himself to the beloved and then feels that, since the *jīva* is the body of the Lord, self-gift to Him has no meaning as He alone is the giver and the gift.[1] The Lord is the life of the *Āḷvār* and the *Āḷvār* is the life of the Lord and the joy of union is reciprocal on account of the reversibility of relationship. The relish of love increases with enjoyment and is therefore fecundative. Even *mōkṣa* has no value, if it is not for His satisfaction. Divine madness like this is infinitely preferrable to the mad hankering after worldly and celestial pleasures. In his exalted mood the *Āḷvār* loses himself in the love of all living beings and feels in his infinite benevolence that every *jīva* should attain the state of Brahman and be free from the sorrows of *karma*. Even the lowliest of the low is adorable if he is touched with divine love. The Lord of the universe seeks His home in the inner self of the *Āḷvār* and thus satisfies His soul-hunger. Brahman realizes His nature only by enveloping the *Āḷvār* and devouring his individuality. The joy of unitive experience is in the loss not of personality, but in personality. Sensation, form and self melt into Him, and finite thought expires in infinite bliss. When the body is at last dissolved in death, the freed self soars gloriously through the shining solar path to its eternal home in the Absolute. Nature celebrates the occasion by wearing a festive garb, and the very gods hail the cosmic event and the *Āḷvār* led by the ambassadors of the Absolute reaches the world of eternal bliss (X. ix) and becomes free for ever.

Mysticism delights in clothing supra-rational experience in symbolic imagery and sensuous form, and it is only the

[1] *Tīruvāimoli*, II. iii. 4.

pure in heart who have subdued the lusts of the flesh and tasted *bhakti rasa* that can understand the language employed in the grammar of spiritual marriage or *ātmavivāha* and appreciate the eternal value of *Bhagavat kāma*. *Kāma S'āstra* is the science of erotics based on conjugal love and it has its own idealistic and mystic charm on account of its being a human expression of the divine love. The mysticism of *ātma vivāha* has spiritual content and value but is dressed in erotic form owing to the fidelity, fecundity and reciprocity so richly treasured in the Hindu ideal of conjugal love. The most inspiring example of such spiritual marriage in Tamil mystic literature is furnished by the life of Āṇḍāḷ, the daughter of Periyāḷvār, who, filled with Kṛṣṇa *prēmā* even in her girlhood, pours out her flaming love in lyric poetry which is unmatched for its thrilling power.

In her *Tiruppāvai*, justly noted for its poetic beauty and philosophic suggestiveness, Āṇḍāḷ gathers together a band of mystics who, like her, were seized with Kṛṣṇa *prēmā* and became God-intoxicated like the *Gōpīs*. They all hurry to the Home of Love in Bṛndāvan to awaken the sleeping Beauty and pray for the fulfilment of their spiritual longing. In another poem known as *Nācciyār Tirumoḷi* consisting of 143 verses, she pours out her burning passion for union with Kṛṣṇa. When there is no response to the message of love sent by her, she pines away in gloom. Then she invokes the aid of Manmatha, but even the seductions of his shafts have no power over the Ravisher of souls. Her passivity gives way to aggressive love and in the frenzy of fierce love, she assaults the Lord by attempting to pluck out the very roots of love budding from the bosom and aim them at the Torturer so that His heart may be pierced by the wounds of unrequited love.

No true God could long resist the call of such unearthly love and in the mystic consummation that follows, the doors of the sleeping Beauty of S'rīraṅgam are flung open. Soul meets soul and Āṇḍāḷ rushes into the arms of love and her separate being melts away in the ecstasy of union.

Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, as enshrined in the *Bhāgavata*, is the concrete expression *par excellence* of the divine *līlā* of love and is the foundation of *Vēdāntic* mysticism. The supernatural and historic Kṛṣṇa depicted in the *Mahā Bhārata* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* as cosmic ruler and redeemer appears in the *Bhagāvata* as the mystic Kṛṣṇa that shines in every *jīva* as its uncreated light and sports with it. Metaphysics is transformed into mysticism when the *tattva* is defined as absolute Beauty with an *aparākṛta* or formless or supersensuous form of its own. The supreme *hita* is *prēmā* or *Bhagavat kāma* and the attainment of bliss is the *puruṣārtha*. Beauty feeds love and love has its fruition in bliss. The Sermon on the Mount has its *raison de etre* in the Song Celestial and the Song Celestial has its meaning and value in the *Bhāgavata* testament of bliss. The ritualism of the *Mīmāmsa*, the quietism of the *Sāṅkhya*, the realism of *Nyāya* and monistic idealism have their fulfilment in Kṛṣṇa *līlā* which is the crown of *Vēdāntic* thought.

The supersensuous beauty of *Vaikuṇṭha* becomes the cosmic beauty or *Bhuvana-sundara* with a view to alluring the *jīva* and ravishing it out of its fleshly feeling. Kṛṣṇa is beauty and bliss. The Holy of holies, *Yogīs'varēs'vara* who has no taint of evil, transforms Himself into *Manmatha Manmatha*, the Conqueror of Eros, by ravishing him out of his erotic attractiveness. Vyāsa, the *Vēdāntin*, and S'uka, the born *Brahmajñānī*, were so much drawn by the perfect *avatāra* of beauty

that they gave up the abstractions of metaphysics and the serenity of *mauna* or silence and revelled in Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. It is the *ṛṣi* who has subdued the lusts of the flesh as *ūrdhva-rētas* or the mystic who has overcome the threefold *tṛṣṇās* that can enter the atmosphere of Bṛndāvana, be entertained by the touches and thrills of Kṛṣṇa *prēmā* and madden others with his divine madness. Brahman as Kṛṣṇa is *sarva rasa* and *sarva gandha*, and His deliciousness is ever creative and fecundative and knows no satiety.[1] The universe is no blot or blank but is ensouled by Beauty which is the food and drink of the mystic. The cosmos is born in Beauty and the whole creative act is the magic of divine love. Mathurā is the heart of the universe and when Beauty was born on the human plane without abandoning its infinity, the shining celestials and the ascetic *ṛṣis* were also born as cowherdesses in that blessed land and Nature put on a festive attire to celebrate the cosmic event. The miracles of love enacted in Gōkula and Bṛndāvana and ending with the *Rāsa Līlā* are so entrancing that even metaphysicians and sages through the ages have renounced everything to dwell in the land of the cowherds and worship its dust.

The secret of the full incarnation of Brahman in Bṛndāvana (*avatāra rahasya*) is revealed in the scene of *Gōpī*-love leading to the *Rāsa-Līlā*. The *ṛṣis* of Daṇḍaka were so much smitten with the entrancing beauty of Rāma that they became love-mad and yearned for tasting *Brahmarasa* or the bliss of Brahman even on the physical plane. The *pūrṇāvatāra* brings out the *māyā* of mystic love when the Enchanter decends into human love by establishing Himself in its centre and by the cunning art of spiritual alchemy transfigures

[1] tad ēva ramyam ruciram navam navam tad ēva s'as'van manasō mahōtsvam—*S'rī Bhāgavatam*, XII. xii. 49.

the bodily self and *brahmānizes* it. Art reveals itself by concealment and it is the art of Kṛṣṇa *māyā* that pleasingly smites selfishness, removes otherness and transmutes it into its own likeness. *Gōpī*-love is the highest symbolic expression of the *s'arīra-s'arīrin* relation that is expounded in the *S'ārīraka S'āstra*. Just as the body without the soul is like fish out of water, so the *Gōpī* could not live without the love of Kṛṣṇa pulsating through her soul. The soul-hunger of Kṛṣṇa was as intense as the God-hunger of the *Gōpīs* and when in the game of love they were stripped of *ahaṅkāra*, Kṛṣṇa entered on the scene to reveal *Brahm-rasa* in the *Rāsa-krīḍā*. All Nature was clothed in radiance and was in a mute rapturous mood. It was a beautiful moon-lit night in favoured Bṛndā-vana in the budding spring, and the silvery Jumna gently glided with limpid waves. The air was perfumed with the fragrance of flowers. The woods were resonant with the notes of the cuckoo, the humming of the bee and the melodious-songs of birds. The grassy lawns were soft like velvet and reflected the shining splendour of the sky. A sublime harmony pervaded and gladdened the whole scene and even the stars in the distant Milky Way twinkled with unutterable love. The voiceless heavens declared the glory and grace of love and gave intimation of their blessed nature. The Beauty of beauties, the Dazzling Dark, entered a lawn on the Jumna bank, flower-garlanded, with a feather on the head, and a flute on His lips and poured forth the sweetest strains of melody. Kṛṣṇa wore the crown of beauty, touched the heart of love and caused entrancing bliss. Nature felt the thrill of love's song and even stones melted with joy. In the village, the artless *Gōpīs* alone heard the call of divine love and were irresistibly drawn by the Enchanter's melody. The *Rāsa-krīḍā* that was then enacted is the highest consummation of mystic

consciousness whose spiritual meaning and value even the genius of S'uka, the philosopher-poet, could not fully bring out. The *Rāsa* dance was a circular rhythm of mystic dance in which the one Beauty without a second became as many Kṛṣṇas as there were *Gōpīs* and, in the ecstasy that followed, the sense of separateness between the finite and the infinite that kept them at arm's length was dissolved. The Dance of Divine Love as the perfection of rhythmic life is the most delicious *rasa* of *Brahmānanda*. Nature responds to the rhythm and tunes itself to the Dance of Divine Love. The atoms dance in matter and suns and stars dance to the tune of gravitation in space. Life dances when it pulsates through the arteries. Ideas trip in the rhythm of logic. Human progress is the procession of rhythmic love, and even in the systematic thinking of the metaphysician, concepts shed their discord owing to the harmony that vibrates through them. In the mystic dance of love, this play reaches perfection. Each *jīva* is a spark of light, a beam of beauty and a note in Kṛṣṇa's flute. In the symphony of the *Rāsa Līlā* Kṛṣṇa is in the centre of love. The centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere. In the ecstasy of the *Rāsa* dance, the self-feeling is swept away and reflection expires in rapture. Infinity is held in the arms of love and eternal bliss is experienced in a moment as the eternal present. S'uka, the *Vēdāntin*, is so much entranced by a glimpse of this unitive joy that he prefers the dust on the stage of the *Rāsa Līlā* to the bliss of *mukti* and *Vaikuṇṭha*.

CHAPTER XIX

MUKTI

THE study of the nature of the *mumukṣu* leads to that of *mukti* and the present chapter deals with the *Vis'iṣṭād-vaitic* exposition of the spiritual destiny of the *mumukṣu* and his attainment of *Paramapada* or the supreme abode of the self. In the *sādhana* stages, including the mystic quest, the ecstasy of union is only momentary and has no security and stability. It is only by attaining *Paramapada* that the *mumukṣu* has an integral experience of the Absolute (*paripūrṇa Brahmā-nubhava*) and enjoys eternal bliss. The *Paramapada sōpāna* or the ladder to perfection as described by Vēdānta Dēs'ika consists of nine stages or steps, of which the first five have already been indicated, *viz.*, *vivēka*, *nirvēda*, *virakti*, *bhīti* and *prasādana*. *Vivēka* is the clear philosophic thought of Brahman as *s'arīrin* and *s'ēṣī*. The second, *nirvēda*, is the moral feeling of remorse arising from reflection on the sinfulness of sin and the sorrows of *puṇya-pāpa*, and it leads to *vairāgya* or the renunciation of the hedonistic joys of heaven and of the contentment of *kaivalya*. *Bhīti* is not the instinct of fear, but the spiritual dread of the hideousness of *saṃsāra* which awakens the religious consciousness and induces the *mumukṣu* to practise *bhakti* and *prapatti* in a volitional or responsive way as means to *mukti*. *Mukti* is impossible without the grace

of God and of the *guru* whether as *gracia operans* or as *gracia cooperans.* When *bhakti* and *prapatti* develop into a thirst for God, God Himself becomes "the Hound of Heaven," who seeks the self, slays its *ahaṅkāra* or egoism, and swallows up its isolated being. The remaining four stages consisting of *utkramaṇa*, *arcirādi*, *divya dēs'a prabhāva* and *prāpti* deal with the *summum bonum* of spiritual endeavour or *puruṣārtha*, and portray in a pictorical way the ascent of the *mukta* or redeemed soul to his home in the Absolute. The *paramaikāntin* or mystic is practically freed from the fetters of *karma* including even *prārabdha karma*, as godliness is already guaranteed to him, and *mukti* may be realized eventually or immediately. In any case, he is a *kṛta-kṛtya*, who has no more problem to solve or evil to subdue. The seed of *saṃsāra* stored up in *sañcita* is destroyed, and the *vidvān* merely awaits release, doing the duties of his *ās'rama*. Till then he has only a glimpse of the Immortal Sea that shines beyond. At the time of the dissolution of the body the *mukta* ascends to *Vaikuṇṭha* by the straight and shining path of *arcirādi* and attains *sāyujya* or intimate union with Brahman.

Mukti is the return from the becoming of *saṃsāra* to the being of Brahman, and is thus a reversal of the empirical process due to the complex of *avidyā*, *kāma* and *karma* and the infinite regress of causality. The self that belongs to Brahman somehow confounds itself, has an empirical dress and claims to be a mode of *acit*, and is thus spatialized by *avidyā* or ignorance. The confusion of *avidyā* generates *kāma* or the desire for sense objects and their transient pleasures. *Avidyā* creates *kāma* and *kāma* creates *avidyā* and *avidyā-kāma* binds the empirical self with the chains of *saṃsāra*, and

subjects it to the claims and counter-claims of *karma* and retribution. The free and eternal self is thus confused by *avidyā*, tempted by *kāma* and confined by *karma* and is caught up in the wheel of time. The objective world of space-time is subject to the *pariṇāma* of endless becoming, and is a cyclic process of being-becoming and *pralaya-sṛṣṭi*. But Brahman is the Absolute that transcends the psycho-physical contractions of the empirical self and the cosmological changes of *prakṛti*. Brahman is ever free from the complex of *avidyā-kāma-karma*. He is alogical, amoral and supra-personal, and is the transcendental Being that is never phenomenalized by space-time and is therefore supra-cosmic. The world of space-time is finite and fractional, and the *jīva* can attain freedom only when it breaks the fetters of *karma* and the barriers of space-time. What is true of the cosmos as macrocosm is also true of the mind-body as a microcosm. What is yonder is here and what is here is yonder. The mind-body is made of *prakṛti* and its functions are due to the entry of the cosmic *dēvas* into it. While Agni, the god of fire, becomes speech, and Vāyu, the wind god, becomes smell, the sun becomes sight and the moon, the mind. One part of man is the earth and the other is heaven, and *mukti* is liberation from worldly and other-worldly limitations and entry into the infinite. *Mukti* thus implies self-transcendence in the subjective aspect of mastery over *karma* and in the objective aspect of going beyond the limits of space-time. The mind-body of the empirical self is composed of the twenty-four *tattvas* or principles of *prakṛti* including psychic, material and cosmic stuff and freedom from embodiment connotes the withdrawal of the *jīva* from the psycho-physical sphere of *avidyā-kāma-karma* and the cosmic sphere of space-time. While the idea of divine immanence inspires the hope of spiritual union and

immortal life, that of transcendence assures the security of salvation in *Paramapada*. Brahman creates the world of space-time as a suitable environment for moulding the *jīva* and shaping it into its own image by *brahmanizing* it, and this consummation is attained in the sphere of eternity. Brahman is partially revealed in the transient world of *līlā* and fully realized only in the eternal world yonder which is referred to as *tripādōsya amṛtam divi* in the *Puruṣa S'ūkta*.

The *Advaitic* idea of *mukti* presents difficulties arising from the dualism between Brahman and *avidyā*. *Avidyā* is either existent or non-existent or both. If it is non-existent like the square-circle as held by the *Ajātavādins*, there is no meaning in seeking *mukti* or negating bare negation. If it exists as a *bhāva padārtha* as held by the phenomenalists, it must have some reality, and what is real cannot be sublated or destroyed. If it is both, as an obscuring indefinable something as held by the illusionists, it confessedly cannot be logically defined as an object of practical enquiry. *Mukti* is the destruction of *avidyā* and the consequent release from embodiment. Hence the idea of *jīvanmukti* or freedom in embodiment, which involves the continuance of the body even after release, is a manifest self-contradiction. It is sought to be explained by the *Advaitin* by the analogies of the whirling of the potter's wheel even after the potter has stopped turning it, of the perception of the double moon even after disillusionment and of the velocity of the flying arrow after it is discharged. But the points of resemblance are not essential. The first simile is not adequate because the idea of causality has strictly no place in *Advaita*. As regards the second simile, there is an illicit use of the causal category. The cause of the illusion is not an illusion, and if there is disillusionment, then the

illusion as sublated by *jñāna* should vanish, and can never continue to be an effect. To say that illusion remains and illusoriness vanishes is ingenious, but not convincing; it explains away the problem instead of explaining it. The third simile also employs the causal category, but really it explains away the whole problem. *Jñāna* and *ajñāna* can never co-exist. If *ajñāna* is sublated, it is destroyed for ever, and there cannot be any degrees in such sublation. The explanation offered by the *Ēkajīvavādins* and the *Nānājīvavādins* is equally unsatisfactory. The former deny the many-soul theory and affirm that the soul is only ōne and that release is entire and instantaneous, as it is the dissolution of nescience. But its chief defect lies in denying the reality of social life and its solidarity and it is a case of super-solipsism. The doctrine of *nānājīva*, which admits of a plurality of *jīvas*, also admits of plurality of *mukti* and there would thus be as many *jīvanmuktas* as there are individual *avidyās*. To overcome this difficulty, the *Advaitin* states that in *jīvanmukti* the *jīvanmukta* becomes *Īs'vara* and *mukti* thus connotes not dis-illusionment or disillusion, but the state of *Īs'varatva*. But even the omniscience of *Īs'vara* is only nescience on a cosmic scale, and till he attains freedom eventually in *sarvamukti* he is not free from *māyōpādhi* or the limitations of *māyā*. To escape this charge, the *Advaitin* defines *mukti* as disillusionment like light removing darkness at once. He denies the validity of two *muktis*, *jīvanmukti* and *vidēhamukti*. Enlightenment is the cessation of *ajñāna* and has no relation to the dissolution of the body. On the onset of *Brahmajñāna*, *bhramā* is sublated or dispelled, and it is immaterial whether there is body or no body. But this theory of sublation is itself riddled with discrepancies and has no conclusiveness. Sublation is a relation between the sublater and the sublated

and involves a locus or *ās'raya*. *Jñāna* cannot stultify *ajñāna* and stultify itself. The latter is sublated by the former; but the former cannot destroy itself. *Jñāna* is itself the effect of *ajñāna*, and the *āvaraṇa s'akti* or obscuring power presists even after the *vikṣēpa* or appearance ceases to be. To say that *jñāna* destroys *ajñāna* and destroys itself like poison dispelling poison and the clearing-nut precipitating itself is not convincing as, in both the analogies, the cause persists in the effect. In the case of the three kinds of reality, *prātibhāsika, vyāvahārika* and *pāramārthika*, there are kinds and degrees of sublation, and the higher stultifies the lower and the highest. *Brahmajñāna*, cannot stultify itself. Sublation is a state of self-transcendence and not a process of negating negation. Thus all the theories of *mukti* like disillusionment, sublation and the dissolution of the false outlook have no finality, and carry no conviction. In true *mukti*, the eternal transcends the temporal, and it is only in the world of Brahman transcending the phenomenal world that the *jīva* is transformed or *brahmanized* and enjoys eternal life. The *mukta* belongs to the realm of Brahman, but as long as he continues in *karma lōka*, he is subject to the ills of *avidyā-kāma-karma*. Emancipation results only when the bound self abandons the realm of *karma* and attains Brahman.

At the time of the dissolution of the physical body, which may happen at any time[1] and in any manner, the released self withdraws from the gross state to the subtle state and ascends to the absolute by the straight and shining path of *arcirādi*. Dissolution is not the destruction of the psychic make-up, but a process of withdrawal and involution, and death to the *vidvān* is the re-entry of the self into the realm of the infinite,

[1] *S. B.*, IV. ii. 19 and 20 and 1 to 13.

which is the headquarters of Reality. The *indriyas* enter into *manas* and *manas* into *prāṇa* and *prāṇa* is absorbed in the *jīva*, and the self, with its homing instinct, sheds the body for ever and retires from functioning in the world of sense and understanding and returns to its centre, which is the heart of *Brahmapuri*. Brahman's entry into matter with the self and makiug the body its living temple are solely with a view to transfiguring it. Death is the last scene of this divine comedy. Before entry into the *Brahmarandhra*, there is the parting of the ways known as *arcirādi* or the path of the Gods and *dhūmayāna* or the path of smoke. The bound *jīva* that has not intuited Brahman follows the dark and dreary way and descends into the wilderness of *saṃsāra* after a temporary enjoyment of the pleasures of *pitṛ lōka* or the world of the manes and of *Svarga*; but the *vidvān* who has esoteric knowledge of Brahman ascends the shining path or *arcirādi gati*.[1] The *Brahmarandhra* is the gateway to God and is illumined by the *jyōtis* of the *Hārda*, the indwelling self; the enlightened *mukta* then finds the *Brahmanāḍi*[2] and soars gloriously to the world of eternal beauty by the radiant path of the gods. The making of a single *mukta* is a cosmic event and the *dēvas* hail the entry of the finite self into infinity and sing hallelujahs in their own celestial way. The cosmic gods like Agni, Vāyu, Varuṇa, Indra and Brahmā greet the *vidvān* as a rare spiritual victor who has regained his spirituality by subduing worldliness. They are not sign-posts (*mārga-chinna*), nor spheres of enjoyment (*bhōgasthāna*), but are spiritual powers with specific functions, of which the most important is the glorifying of the radiant self in its triumphant progress to its pre-established eternal[3] home. The spiritual ascent is

[1] *Kaṭh, Up.*, II. vi. 16.
[2] *S. B.*, IV. ii. 16.
[3] *S. B.*, IV. iii. 4.

facilitated by the help of the trans-human person known as *amānava puruṣa* who is really the ambassador of the Absolute.[1] The *mukta* soars on the two wings of freedom and wisdom higher and higher, and goes beyond the cosmic sphere of space-time consisting of the seven spheres or circles (*āvaraṇa saptaka*) of *aṇḍa* (the mundane world), *jala* (the world of water), *agni* (the world of fire), *ākās'a* (the world of ether), *ahaṅkāra* (egoism), *mahat* (intellect) and *pradhāna* (matter), sheds the garments of Nature, reaches the sphere of Brahman and enjoys its bliss for ever.

The *Sūtrakāra* here raises the eschatological question whether this *arcirādi gati* involving ascent and attainment applies to the meditators on the Supreme Brahman or those on the effected or *kārya* Brahman called Hiraṇyagarbha, and takes as his text the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* passage (V. x. 2) which promises the godward way leading to Brahma (*sa enān Brahma*[2] *gamayati*) to one who practises the *Pañcāgnividyā* or meditation on the five-fold fire. In discussing this topic in IV. iii. 6, he considers the *prima facie* view of Bādari that the *gati* applies only to meditators on the *kārya* Brahman and its refutation by Jaimini before he states his own view or *siddhānta*. But the *Advaitin* turns the tables by accepting, on his own *a priori* principles of reasoning, the view of Bādari as the first and final view. The distinction between *saguṇa* Brahman and *nirguṇa* Brahman serves his purpose and *saguṇa* Brahman is here equated by him with Hiraṇyagarbha, the first born of the Absolute. The monistic philosopher regards the ideals of *gati* (ascent) and *gantavya*

[1] *Ch. Up.*, V. x. 2.

[2] The word "Brahma" is used here in the neuter and so signifies Parabrahman. The same word in the masculine form Brahmāṇam would apply to Brahmā the four-faced, the effected or *kārya* Brahman.

(attainment) as the categories of phenomenal reality, which have no adequacy in the identity philosophy of *nirguṇa* Brahman. *Mukti* is the awakening of pure consciousness which is eternally self-realized and not the accomplishment of a far off divine event. The notion of a *Brahmalōka* or paradise, in which the released self basks and feasts in eternal sunshine, drinks nectar without satiety and divinely obtains all worlds and all desires, is refuted and rejected by the monistic philosopher as a mere anthropomorphic and hedonistic view suited only to the empirically-minded. The distinctions of here and yonder, now and hereafter are spatial and temporal ideas and they cannot apply to *mukti*, which is the immediate intuition of the Absolute here-now and not something to be attained or super-added. In *mukti*, there is no going or goal, as Brahman is the same as *jñāna* or *mukti*. The absolute, being changeless and timeless, can never move and "has no seasons." Progress is in reality, though it is not of reality, and it has a meaning only in the moral and religious realms. The *Advaitic* theory of two Brahmans claims to satisfy both the philosopher, that knows the self-identical Absolute, and the empirically-minded theist that worships a personal God and seeks His kingdom. With this *a priori* idea, the *Advaitin* defends Bādari and assigns only a secondary value to the *siddhānta* of Bādarāyaṇa by straining the texts. Bādari argues thus: Firstly, the neuter word 'Brahma' in the context signifies or suggests the *kārya* Brahman owing to the proximity of the latter to Parabrahman, as its first born.[1] Secondly, the promise of final *mukti* to the seeker after *kārya* Brahman is not self-discrepant, as he attains it eventually along with Brahmā himself in *krama mukti*, though not immediately. Thirdly, the reference in the corresponding

[1] Vide, *Sv. Up.*, VI. xviii.

passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (VIII. ii. 15) to the *muktas* being led to the worlds of Brahman can apply only to the pluralistic universe of conditioned Brahman and not to the Absolute.

Following the interpretation of the *Sūtrakāra*, Rāmānuja combats the view of Bādari and establishes the truth that *arcirādi gati* is the direct way to *mukti*, by appeal to reason and revelation. *Mukti* is not only the direct apprehension of Brahman, but a spiritual pilgrimage to, or the progressive attainment of *Brahmalōka*. The *Advaitic* exposition of the doctrine of two *muktis,—krama mukti* for those who meditate on the *saguṇa* Brahman reduced to the level of Hiraṇya-garbha, the *kārya* Brahman, and of *jīvanmukti* for those who directly apprehend the Absolute or *nirguṇa* Brahman,—is untenable. Pure *Advaita* as identity philosophy does not admit of the dual standpoint of two *vidyās*, two Brahmans and two *muktis*. The very distinction between the *mumukṣu* who seeks *jñāna* and the *mukta* who realizes it, betrays the self-contradiction between becoming and being. On the strict *Advaitic* view or *ajātavāda*, Brahman *is* and *māyā is not* and the problem of two paths, two view-points and even stages of sublation, is illegitimate and non-existent like the square-circle. But practical *Advaita*, as the theory of compromises which concedes the reality of the spatialized Brahman to suit the needs of theism, is caught up in the confusions of thought and the dogmatism of theology. The theory of an unreal self seeking freedom from unreal bondage and attaining an unreal world is itself false and illusory. *Mukti* is a region where reason cannot penetrate and the illumined faith in the *Upaniṣad* which has specialized in it is the only logical attitude, and not agnosticism. If the *Upaniṣad* is a real text

and test of truth, it could not speak with a double voice and could not admit of the antagonism between the metaphysical highest or *nirguṇa* Brahman and the theological highest or *kārya* Brahman. To seek the support of the *Upaniṣad* in favour of this distinction is a case of straining the text to suit the needs of monistic metaphysics.

The three arguments are countered by the following reasons. Firstly, to say that Brahman refers to Brahmā on account of the proximity of the latter to Brahman, and to make *saguṇa* Brahman a finite God are to do violence to philosophic thinking and religious exposition. In the second place, there is no collision between historic progress and philosophic insight, as the eternal alone gives a meaning to the temporal. It is only the moral and spiritual self fettered by *karma* that progresses with its subtle *s'arīra* towards perfection and not the Absolute which is pure and perfect. If *saguṇa* Brahman is a glorified *saṃsārin* needing *mukti* for himself, no *mumukṣu* will adore a finite God who is abrahman suffering from imperfection. The *Advaitin* first accepts *saguṇa* Brahman as satisfying the *Sūtrakāra*'s definition in the second *Sūtra* that Brahman is the first cause and finally relegates the same *saguṇa* Brahman to the status of the effected Brahmā or the first-born of Brahman. As regards the so-called pluralistic view contained in the expression 'worlds of Brahman,' it should be noted that the words 'worlds' and 'Brahman' are appositional involving no opposition, and connote Brahman. In *mukti*. the pluralistic consciousness of the world alone is abolished and not the pluralistic world itself, and it is entirely different from 'the paradise of the popular imagination' both in degree and in kind; *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*

alone satisfies the philosophic quest for unity and the mystic hunger for union.

The crux of the whole problem lies in the interpretation of the *Sūtra* (IV. ii. 12) about the destiny of the released self as expounded in the *Bṛhadāraṇyakōpaniṣad* (VI. iv. 6) : " Of him who is without desire (*akāmayamāna*) his vital breaths or *prāṇas* do not depart." The contention of the *Advaitin* that it refers to the immediate destruction of the *liṅga s'arīra* or subtle body resulting from *avidyā* is examined at some length in Chapter VIII of my *Philosophy of Bhēdābhēda.* It is there shown that the *Upaniṣadic* meaning is that the *prāṇas* in the *liṅga s'arīra* follow the *vidvān* till he transcends the world of *saṃsāra.* If the theory of the fictitious self (*caitanya ābhāsa*), which is only an illusory appearance of consciousness attaining the world of *Īs'vara*, the first born of the cosmic figment, is seriously maintained by speculative *Advaita*, *mukti* becomes a make-believe, and the whole theory is open to the charge of acosmic illusionism. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitin* claims insight into *Vēdāntic* tradition and seeks the saving grace of Brahman as *mōkṣaprasāda*, a term for which, according to Deussen, there is no corresponding term in the esoteric system of monism. The *Upaniṣad* repeatedly declares the attainment of Brahman as the goal and glory of spiritual endeavour. The *Chāndōgya* (IV. xv. 6), the *Muṇḍaka* (I. ii. 11), the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (VIII. ii. 15) and the *Pras'na Upaniṣads* (I. 10) guarantee eternal life (*apunarāvṛtti*) to the *vidvān* who seeks the luminous path and avoids the way of darkness. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (II. vi. 16) and the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (VI. v. 1) likewise glorify the way to immortality and the *Gītā* also (VIII. 26) extols the *dēvayāna* path leading to eternity. The *Sūtras* begin with the metaphysical definition

of Brahman as the immanent ground of existence and end with the religious idea of Brahman as the goal of spiritual experience and the home of all eternal values, and promise *mukti* and eternal life to the seeker after Brahman as the God of religion.

The ascent to the Absolute is further described in the *Paramapada Sōpāna,* following the *Vaikuṇṭha Gadya* and the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* as the entry into the home of the Absolute or *divyadēs'a prāpti.* The soaring self led by the ambassador of eternity at last enters the waters of immortality or *Virajā* which mark the boundary line or the transition between the transcendental sphere of Brahman and the empirical sphere of *karma.* By spiritually plunging into the Ocean Pacific, as the mystic calls it, the released self is purified and perfected and goes to the other shore like the stranded islander crossing the sea, and enters his own home in the country of the Soul, where there is light without night or nescience. When Brahman is intuited, the fetters of the heart are broken,[1] all doubts are solved and all *karma* is destroyed. As the flowing rivers disappear in the sea losing their name and form, a wise man freed from name and form goes to the Shining Self and the mortal becomes immortal.[2] The *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad,* while expounding the *Paryaṅka Vidyā* (Chap. I. 2 to 5) portrays in the language of sense-symbolism and artistic imagery, the ineffable ecstasy of attaining *Brahmalōka* or *Vaikuṇṭha* which is alogical, amoral and supra-personal. The *Upaniṣad* frequently refers to the transcendental nature of experience, when it insists on the initiation into *Brahmajñāna* of those who are specialists

[1] *Muṇḍ. Up.,* II. ii. 8.
[2] *Ibid.,* III. ii. 8.

in spirituality. Brahman as ultimate reality is realizable only by the *vidvān* who is pure in heart, and it is by *Brahmaprayatna* that he can attain *Brahmajñāna* and eventually *Brahmānanda* in *Brahmalōka*. Immersed in the Ocean Pacific, the *mukta* is freed from the contractions of *karma* in its dual aspect of *puṇya-pāpa* and the pairs of opposites and at the entrance to the infinite he is transfigured and *brahmanized*. The process of transfiguration is explained metaphorically as *Brahmālaṅkāra*, *Brahmagandha* and *Brahmarasa*. In the world of *karma*, the senses turn outward, but the *vidvān* who desires immortality has *Brahmadṛṣṭi* or a vision of Brahman. The form, flavour and fragrance of *Brahmānubhava* are not physical or psychical, but are *aprākṛta* or super-sensuous. In the world of Brahman or *Paramapada*, matter shines without mutation and time exists under the form of eternity. The eternals are not *vis'ēṣaṇas* or adjectives housed in the Absolute as its elements, but are its members revelling in the rapture of union. "The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars; by His light everything is lighted." "Brahman is before and behind, above and below." The freed soul gloriously enters into *S'rī Vaikuṇṭha* which is the heart of *Brahmalōka* and its headquarters, reaches the hall of *ānandamaya* or bliss and has a direct soul-sight of the *Paraṃjyōtis* or Supreme Light with a shining form more luminous than a million suns on the *paryaṅka* or couch, of which till then he had only fragmentary, inferential and *s'āstraic* knowledge. Brahman as infinite Beauty is enthroned on a *paryaṅka* which no mortal eye has seen and which is supported by *dharma*, *jñāna*, *vairāgya* and *ais'varya*. That throne is *prajñā* or wisdom and Brahman is *satyaṃ* or the true of the true. The released self realizes the unitive consciousness. The infinite of space-time, which staggers the

scientific imagination, pales into infinitesimal littleness in the light of the infinite and the eternal glory of *Vaikuṇṭha*, which transcends the limits of thought. The *Brahmavit* enjoys all the perfections of *Vaikuṇṭha* like *sālōkya* or identity of abode, *samīpya* or proximity, *sārūpya* or similarity of form and *sāyujya* or intimate union; and is ever immersed in the eternal bliss of Brahman. *Sālōkya* or co-existence leads to fellowship (*sāmīpya*) and transformation and deification (*sārūpya*), and is consummated in the bliss of communion or *sāyujya*.

The nature of *mukti* as the attainment of the blessedness of *Paramapada* cannot be described or defined, and even the *Upaniṣad* with its genius for Brahman recognizes the utter inadequacy of finite categories to grasp the meaning of that transcendental state. *Brahmalōka* is the nameless beyond, which cannot be proved by logical thinking or apprehended by *s'āstraic* or scriptural knowledge. The absolute of ontology is beyond space and time or *prakṛti* and *kāla*, and is therefore *niravayava* or formless, *nirguṇa* or indeterminate, *kālātīta* or eternal. As *Paramātman*, Brahman is the super-subject and is supra-personal and transcends the limits of materialism and spiritualism. Ethical religion is equally helpless in knowing the redemptive will of *Īs'vara* as the Creator of creators and overcoming the dilemma of free will and determinism. From the religious point of view, He reveals Himself unto him whom He chooses as He is Himself the *upāya* and the *upēya*; and it is difficult to decide between voluntarism and predestination. On the whole, the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* idea of *mukti* transcends the theorizing activity of thought, and cannot be labelled as a form of theism, non-dualism or any other known form of 'ism.'

This negative logic saves its philosophy from the charge of dogmatism, but it may lead to the perils of agnosticism. The *Upaniṣad* therefore attempts to describe the inexpressible experience by positive predicates, by insisting on the fact of intuitive perception of Brahman by the purified and perfected consciousness or *jñāna*. The *Brahmavit* can apprehend Brahman with the divine eye, comprehend His nature and have an integral experience of the absolute (*paripūrṇa Brahmānubhava*). He is led from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light and from death to immortality [1] and though this experience is alogical and amoral, the *Upaniṣad* tries to make it intelligible to the empirical consciousness in terms of cognition, conation and feeling. Brahman is the All-Self and by the expansive consciousness of *dharmabhūtajñāna*, the *nityasūri* realizes the unitive state. Ṛṣi Vāmadēva saw Brahman in all beings and all beings in Brahman and, on the onset of cosmic consciousness, he sang "I am Manu, I am the sun, I am all things.". The *mukta* overcomes the moral distinction of *puṇya-pāpa* and realizes all his desires in *Paramapada*. His self-feeling melts away at the sight of the bewitching beauty of Brahman and his *Vēdāntic* thought expires in the ecstasy of mystic union.

Yama, the God of Death, teaches Nacikētas the nature of deathless life or *mukti*, and in expounding his teaching, Rāmānuja following the *Sūtrakāra* develops his philosophy by refuting rival theories.[2] These may be arranged in an ascending order according to their *Vēdāntic* value. The Buddhist, as *Kṣaṇikavijñānavādin*, regards the *jīva* as a series of momentary mental states appearing as a persisting

[1] *Bṛhad. Up.*, III. iii. 28.

[2] *S.B.*, I. ii. 12.

entity and explains *mukti* as the cessation of the psycho-physical process. In *nirvāṇa*, the self perishes, the five *skandhas* are abolished and pain passes away and there is stirless repose. But a mere mental state cannot seek *mukti* and the fatal negative logic of *nirvāṇa* leads to the abyss of *s'ūnya* or void. The Jaina posits the existence of the *jīva* and explains *mukti* as the severance of the *ātman* from the soilure of *karma* and the entry of the self into endless perfection. But if *mukti* is an ascent and not an attainment, such an endless pursuit is without ethical meaning and spiritual value. The ethical concept of progress can have its meaning only in the religious realization of Brahman. In the *Sāṅkhyan* scheme, bondage is the conjunction of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* and *mukti* is their disjunction. *Kaivalya* is the flight of the alone to the alone. It is more a negative state of riddance from evil than the realization of positive bliss. The freed self is a passive spectator that knows nothing and does nothing. The *Vais'ēṣika* affirms the existence of *Īs'vara*; but his view of *mukti* is also negative, as it means only the cessation of pain and the abolition of the cognitional activity of the *jīva*. The *Vais'ēṣika* feels that thinking leads to doubt and distress, and is therefore inclined to do away with the whole process. But the state of the abolished consciousness is like the stillness of the statue and the peace of death. Consciousness without an object is equivalent to unconsciousness. The *Vēdāntic* view of *mukti* has the merit of recognizing the eternal value of *Brahma-jñāna* though *Vēdāntins* differ in their exposition. Bhāskara, the *Bhēdābhēdavādin*, defines *mukti* as the attainment of *ēkībhāva* or oneness with the Absolute in which the *jīva* sheds its conditionateness or *upādhis* and becomes the unconditioned Brahman. The other *Bhēdābhēdavādins* correct the monistic

tendency of Bhāskara and explain *mukti* as the realization of the identity of the *jīva* with Brahman as well as its difference. To them *mukti* is not the abolition of the self but its fulfilment as an element or member of the Absolute. As the *S'ākta* says, Brahman is both the seamless or pure consciousness and the sundered whole. The *Dvaitavāda* of Ānandatīrtha rejects all the monistic views of *mukti*, but its contention that there are differences in the qualitative experiences of the bliss of Brahman is not acceptable to the *Vis'iṣādvaitin.*

The *Advaitic* view of *mukti* in its different forms demands more attention on account of its philosophic interest and the respect it commands in modern Indian thought. *Mukti* is defined by the *Advaitins* as the negation of nescience or *bhramā* that is somehow in Brahman and is variously interpreted as self-transcendence, disillusionment or self-identity of the Absolute. If *avidyā* means the principle of relativity or duality, *mukti* is the dissolution of the dualistic outlook, and it is not very different from Bhāskara's *ēkībhāva*. If *avidyā* is the *upādhi* as an illusion and not as a phenomenal appearance, *mukti* means disillusionment. By denying the false, the true remains identical with itself. This view, however, has to meet the charge of leading to acosmism and subjectivism. *Mukti* is negatively stated as the removal of *ajñāna* through *jñāna*, If *avidyā* is non-existent, like the square-circle, and *Brahmajñāna* is *jñāna* that is Brahman and not *jñāna* of Brahman, Brahman is ever-existent, and the question of *mukti* would not arise at all. The theistic criticism of *Advaita* as Buddhism in disguise is met by its modern expounders by the counter-argument that Buddhism itself is *Advaita* in a negative aspect. The *Advaitic* view of *nirvāṇa* as

Brahmajñāna is said to complete and justify the negative way of Buddhist dialectics, as it regards the Absolute as *s'ūnya* or non-existent from the empirical standpoint and as the fulness of being in the transcendental state. Buddhism is said to be valuable to the *Advaitic* dialecticians when it lays bare the self-contradictions of the *Īs'vara* concept and thus marks a transition to *aikyavāda*. The absolutist as a mere *Māyāvādin* makes common cause with Nāgārjuna and Bradley, and pulls down *Īs'vara* from His *Īs'varatva* by defining Him as the Absolute phenomenalized, being-becoming and the finite-infinite caught up in the self-contradiction of *māyā*, subordinating Him even to the *jīvanmukta* and finally destroying Him by the devasting dialectic of *dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* and *ēkajīvavāda*. S'aṅkara's distinction of two Brahmans and two *muktis* tends to compromise the Absolute of monism by mobilizing the immobile *nirguṇa* Brahman and giving Him an empiric dress to suit the needs of the *avidyā*-ridden theist, though this attempt at fusion seems to end in confusion. The Nāgārjuna or Humian mentality is obvious in the following compliment paid by an eminent *Advaitin* to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*: "Rāmānuja's beautiful stories of the other world, which he narrates with the confidence of one who had personally assisted at the origination of the world, carry no conviction." The criticism of illusionism by the same thinker is, however, in the theistic line. "The false imitators of the *Upaniṣadic* ideal with an extreme of arrogant audacity declare that Brahman is absolutely homogeneous impersonal intelligence." If the *Advaitin* gives up his intellectualism and its resulting agnosticism and follows his religious instinct, *nirguṇa* Brahman would become practically the same as the Brahman of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and *mukti* would then be gained by the saving grace of God. *Nirguṇa* Brahman would not be the truth of *s'aguṇa* Brahman

as reality behind appearance but would be *saguṇa* Brahman itself. *Mukti* would then mean not the abolition of plurality, but only the removal of the sense of plurality or of a false outlook.

Rāmānuja understands by *mukti* the integral experience of Brahman that has infinite *jñāna* and *ānanda* and other perfections. This is also the true nature of the *jīva* realized by the destruction of *avidyā-karma*. The *jīva* is a *prakāra* or *s'arīra* of Brahman and its *jñāna* which is infinite, has, as its essential nature, the intuitive experience of the bliss of Brahman. The *Chāndōgya* text (VIII. iii. 4) explains *mukti* as the self-realization of the *ātman* by self-transcendence "*Paraṃ jyōtir upasampadya svēna rūpēṇa abhinispadyatē*" and the *Sūtras* bring out its full implication.[1] The serene self attains the being of its being when it has a soul-sight of the boundless light of Brahman, and thus attains its essential and eternal nature. Self-realization is not the attainment or emergence of something new, but is the self-manifestation due to the cessation of *avidyā-karma* and the *saṃsāric* process resulting thereform. In *mukti* the *ātman* is free from sin, old age, death, grief, hunger and thirst, and his desires are at once realized. *Karma* conditions *jñāna* and contracts it and creates the bodily self which is subject to contingency, change and sorrow; but in *mukti* the mortal becomes immortal and the self regains its eternity. Consciousness in the empirical states of waking, dream and sleep is obscured by *avidyā* and is cribbed and cabined; but, in the expansive state of the unitive life, it realizes its infinity. Though the *ātman* is *avikāra* or changeless and *nitya* or eternal, the limitations and obscurations of its attributive intelligence affect its integrity indirectly, and it is

[1] *S'. B.*, IV. iv. 1.

only in the state of self-realizedness that the self shines in its own effulgence like the cloudless sun. The *ātman* itself is a ray of the *Paramjyōtis* or supreme light and its luminosity is the revelation of the boundless light, which is the source of the light of suns and stars and the serene self. Self-realization is thus the intuitive knowledge of the *ātman* and its self, and is not bare identity. If, as the *Advaitin* says, *jñāna*, consists in the abolition of the *vṛttis* of the self or psychoses, nothingness alone would remain, and *mukti* would cease to have any meaning. The self cannot suck in its own selfhood without committing suicide.

Brahmajñāna is the intuition of Brahman as the supreme Self, and, though it is alogical, the *Sūtras*, in the concluding section, seek to make it intelligible to us by using metaphors and analogies in the language of cognition, conation and feeling. Before defining the content of *mukti*, the fascinating problem of the destiny of the soul is discussed. Is *mukti* the experience of absolute distinction and difference between the *mukta* and Brahman or of their identity or inseparability ? The *Upaniṣads* express divergent views, which seem to defy the *Sūtra* method of *samanvaya* and synthesis. The *bhēda* texts like those of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I. iii. 1) dwell on the distinction between the two and the absolute dependence of the *jīva* on *Īs'vara*. The *Taiṭṭirīya Upaniṣad* (*Ānand*. i) and the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (III. i. 3) dwell on fellowship and equality of attributes when the seer intuits the shining self and attains all desires along with Brahman. The *Chāndōgva* text in VI. xiii and the *Muṇḍaka* text in III. ii. 8 intimate the truth of absorption by the analogy of the dissolution of salt in water and the merging of the river in the sea, The western absolutist uses the terms absorption, mergence,

coalescence, dissolution, dissipation and identity in a loose sense without defining their exact meaning and value. The monistic texts favour identity when they affirm that the self is Brahman. The philosophical theist insists on the external but eternal relation between the finite and the infinite and defines Brahman as the personal God entering into personal relations with the *jīva* with a view to redeeming it from its career of sin, and states that, in *Brahmalōka*, the *mukta* has the freedom to serve *Īs'vara* in his own unique way. He also affirms the fellowship and equality of the self with God as the son of God participating in the joy of the Father. Bhāskara defines *mukti* as *ēkībhāva* or oneness with the Absolute in which the self is dissolved in the infinite both in existence and in content. The idea of *Dvaitādvaita* or pluralistic monism as a form of *bhēdābhēda* preserves separateness as well as unity. The monist insists on identity or *aikya* as opposed to separateness (*bhēda*), similarity (*parama sāṃya* or *sāmarasya*), absorption (*ēkībhāva*) and the ideas of *bhēdābhēda*.

The *Sūtrakāra* reconciles all the texts and their truths by the all-comprehensive concept of *avibhāga*.[1] The *ātman* has Brahman as its inner self and *prakārin* and the non-dualistic consciousness of the *mukta* is revealed in the experience, "I am Brahman without any division or *vibhāga*." This means not *svarūpa aikya* or absolute identity but *vis'iṣṭa aikya* in which the self is realized as the *apṛthaksiddhavis'ēṣaṇa* or inseparable mode and not as an adjective housed in the Absolute. The *jīva* abides for ever as an entity and is different from Brahman, but though there is difference in denotation, there is identity in connotation, as every concept connoting the *prakāra* also connotes the

[1] *S.B.*, IV. iv. 4.

prakārin. This *avinābhāva* or inseparability abolishes the sense of exclusiveness and externality that belongs to the bodily self of *ahaṅkāra* or egoism, but it does not annul the *ahaṃ* or ego consciousness of the *ātman.* Rapt in love, the *mukta* is ever drawn by the beauty of Brahman and enjoys its bliss. Equality is attained when the *brahmanized mukta* sheds his body, shakes off *puṇya-pāpa* and acquires the purity of Brahman. Such transmutation does not mean that every discord and evil is harmonized in the Absolute and contributes to its wholeness. The sense of dependence is revealed by the truth that the *s'arīra* depends for its life on the *s'arīrin* and serves as an instrument of His will. *Avibhāga* or non-division thus connotes existential difference between Brahman and the *mukta* and experienced unity due to the joy of *sāyujya* or intimate communion, and it is not the same as the loss of personality. In the mystic sense, the self-feeling is swallowed up in the supra-personal experience of *avibhāga* or the unitive experience of the bliss of Brahman. This brings out the nature of *Brahmarasa* more than co-existence (*sālōkya*), similarity (*sārūpya*) and intimacy (*sāmīpya*). As the *Visṇu Purāṇa*[1] says, the *mukta* attains *ātmabhāva* like magnetized iron and is not identical with Brahman. The author of the *Dramiḍa Bhāṣya* also says that owing to his equality (*sāyujya*) with the divinity, the *mukta* effects all things like Him. The *Gītā* defines *mukti* as the attainment of equality of attributes with Brahman.[2]

Identity philosophy (*aikyavāda*) is extolled by Deussen as the fundamental truth of philosophy and religion, which the *Upaniṣadic* thinkers discovered for the first time to their

[1] *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, VI. vii. 30.
[2] *B. G.*, XIV. 2.

immortal honour. The same solution was, according to him, found later, on two occasions, by Parmenides and Plato in whom Greek thought reached its climax, and still later by Kant and Schopenhauer. According to this view, Brahman is the sole reality and the world is only an appearance or *māyā* which is to be rejected. The equational view is later explained by Deussen in terms of unio-mystico or mystic union. In the metaphysical domain there is no becoming. What is two can never become one and what is one is one already. The state of *mukti* is further elucidated by the term indivisibility in the light of the simile of the rivers losing their names when they flow into the sea. *Mukti* is also defined by him as a state of the transformation of the natural man. He says that the *Upaniṣad* and the New Testament state the same truth though the former demands a change of the understanding and the latter, of the will. The terms equation, union and indivisibility used by Deussen are neither synonymous nor clear. Identity is not the same as equation and both are different from the term indivisibility. The meaning conveyed by the term transformation as also the term inseparability fits in with *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and has no relation to the theory of pure consciousness Deussen's exposition is rejected by other modern *Advaitins* who make a distinction between the illusion theory and the phenomenon view, and criticize the former as a false imitation or misunderstanding of the *Upaniṣadic* ideal. The finite according to them is rooted in the infinite and even in *mukti* there is the abolition not of plurality but only of the sense of plurality. The illusoriness of the world disappears and no longer deceives the *mukta*, though the illusion may remain. Non-difference denies difference but does not affirm identity. *Advaitic* experience thus interpreted has much in common with Bhāskara's idea of *mukti* as *ēkībhāva* or the unitive

experience of the mystic. If the logic of mysticism is followed, the only conclusion is the *Sūtra* idea of *avibhāga* as interpreted by Rāmānuja. *Advaita* has either to accept the *ajātavāda* of Gauḍapāda and its Buddhistic leanings or to make common cause with the view of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. The latter is an integral experience of Brahman which satifies all the demands of spiritual life, and the canons of consistent thinking.

The next question is the enquiry into the nature of the manifestation of intelligence in *mukti*. While Jaimini thinks that the freed self is *brahmanized* and has the eight-fold perfections of Brahman, Auḍulōmi favours the monistic view that *mōkṣa* is the realization of the pure consciousness of Brahman (*vijñā-ghana*) devoid of the subject-object relation. The *Advaitin* distinguishes between the intuition of the indeterminate and the logical thought of the concrete universal. He concludes that *Brahma jñāna* is consciousness transcending the self-contradictions of the subject-object relation and that Jaimini is at the logical level of *Īs'vara* and that Auḍulōmi has the intuition of the Absolute. But consciousness, as the name itself suggests, implies an experiencing subject conscious of an object and is therefore determinate. Absolute consciousness without any content is in no way different from absolute unconsciousness like that of a stone or the sleep state. Consistent monism affirming absolute consciousness or *cinmātra* cannot maintain the theory of the All-Self or universal consciousness, as the *sat* without a second is neither a self nor All-Self, and the universe and its manifoldness vanish in the Absolute. If *Īs'vara* is moulded by thought and spatialized by the *upādhis*, and if omniscience is nescience on a cosmic scale, philosophy itself would be

infected by *avidyā* and religion would become a mere appearance. The only way of avoiding subjectivism and nihilism is to retrace the steps and accept the integrity of the one Brahman without dissecting it into two and to consider it as *saguṇa* as all the other *Vēdāntic* philosophers do. In *mukti*, the *brahmanized* self acquires *Brahma jñāna* and intuits Brahman in all beings and all beings in Brahman " under the form of eternity." Intuition is the alogical which is the fulfilment of the logical. The monism of Auḍulōmi is acceptable to Bādarāyaṇa if it brings out the self-manifestation of intelligence without doing violence to the theistic exposition of Jaimini. The principle of sublation is inadmissible where there is equal *Upaniṣadic* authority for both the sides, and there is really no self-contradiction in the varieties of *Upaniṣadic* experience. Self-illumination in the state of *mukti* brings out the infinite intelligence and omniscience of the finite or monadic self, when it is freed from the limitations of *karma*. Its *vis'iṣṭa aikya* is then apprehended in non-difference from Brahman. The *Vēdāntic* seer intuits Brahman as his very self when he says: " I am Thou, Holy Divinity, and Thou art myself." " What He is, that am I." Praḥlāda, like Vāmadēva, in his ecstasy, thus decribes the onset of cosmic consciousness and All-Selfness: " As the infinite is all-pervading, He is myself, all things proceed from me, I am all things, all things are in me who am eternal."[1] The *ātman* is non-different from the Supreme Self by attaining the being of its being. Nammāḷvār also affirms the truth of this cosmic experience when he, in the excess of his love, imitates and mirrors forth the glory of God and claims in his *Tiruvāimoḷi* (V. vi) the two *vibhūtis* of the cosmic and ultra-cosmic functions as his own. He feels he owns the infinite when he has

[1] *Viṣṇu Purāna*, I. xix. 85.

a soul-sight of 'that divine thread which holds the whole congeries of things.' Thus the *mukta* with his freed consciousness views himself and the cosmos with the eye of Brahman (*Brahma cakṣus*) when he experiences his *ahaṃ* as the *prakāra* or mode of Brahman and when his *jñāna* mirrors forth the whole universe and he realizes his oneness with Brahman.

In the world of the Absolute as will, the self is freed from its imprisonment in egoistic individuality and entanglement in the wheel of *puṇya-pāpa* and acquires its purity and other perfections. *Mukti* is not the isolation of *kaivalya* nor the abolition of consciousness, but is the consummation of moral endeavour, in which the divinized self realizes the eternal values of life. It is a state of self-transcendence in which the moral life is perfected in the amoral, resulting in the transvaluation and conservation of all eternal values. Owing to the infinity of the essential quality, the *mukta*, as Dramiḍa says, effects all things like the divinity.[1] The *mukta* enjoys the perfections of Brahman with Brahman[2] and enjoys everything everywhere by his mere *saṅkalpa* or will without any external aid or constraint. He wills the true and the good and every conation is immediately fulfilled without the moral gulf between endeavour and end, between the apprehension of good and its attainment. The victim of *saṃsāra* is now a victor thereof and a self-ruler and enjoys absolute freedom from the shackles of *karma* and the taint of error, evil, ugliness and other imperfections. He is no longer subject to *Vēdic* and *Vēdāntic* imperatives and external determinations. The 'ought to be' of *Karma Yōga* is now fulfilled in the

[1] *S. B. E.*, XLVIII, p. 99.
[2] *Tait. Up.*, Ānand. i.

deeper 'is' of the world of Brahman. Every *saṅkalpa* or act of will is at once satisfied, and this satisfaction is enriched by fecundity and the novelties created by the self. The idea of a block universe in which the *sat* merely is a stirless, static being and the self emptied of its content is a void, is alien to the *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* view of *mōkṣa*. The eternal realizes itself in the temporal and is an eternal now. When space-time is transfigured, it adds to the infinite riches of spiritual experience. The *mukta* has the freedom to move in both the worlds. While the ascent to the world of eternity is an escape from the sorry scheme of *saṃsāra*, the descent of the freed self into the finite world expresses the cosmic freedom of the *mukta*, whose all-pervasive consciousness destroys the barriers of distance and duration. The worlds of *līlā* and *nitya* constitute the world of Brahman as a whole and are comprised in the all-inclusive cosmic consciousness. By realizing Brahman as the self of all the worlds, everything else is realized.

Though Brahman imparts its nature to the *ātman*, its mode, and infinitizes its *jñāna*, the *ātman*, persists in its monadic being with a view to utilizing the freedom gained in *mōkṣa* in self-effacement and service to the Supreme Self, who is the ground of all existents. *Īśvara* alone has cosmic rulership and the stability of salvation is the gift of His redemptive will, and it is this *jagad vyāpāra* or universal lordship that marks the difference between the *ātman* that is the self-ruler and Brahman the world-ruler.[1] He alone sustains the cosmic, moral and spiritual order and guarantees immortality to the *mumukṣu*. He plays with the *ātman* in the world of *līlā* and *brahmanizes* it in the world of eternity. Though God's

[1] jagad vyāpāravarjam prakaraṇād asannihitatvācca |. *Vē. Sū.*, IV. iv. 17.

will is eternally self-realized, it is also realizing itself in the making of the universe for the moulding of *muktas*. The finite self lives, moves and has its being in Brahman as the All-Self or *sarva s'arīrin*. The *Sūtra* in the *S'ārīraka S'āstra* dealing with cosmic rulership or *jagad-vyāpāra* is a stumbling block to the monist, and he seeks to explain it away by the theory of two Brahmans and two *muktas*. But the logic of *jīvanmukti* as expounded by *Māyāvāda* exposes itself to the difficulties of subjectivism and pan-illusionism. *Jīvanmukti* to be absolute cannot admit of stages of stultification or negating negation and this would be possible only if the pure *Advaita* of *ēka-jīva* be accepted with its solipsistic consequences. But practical *Advaita* with its faith in *s'āstra* and in the social order prefers the philosophy of *nānā-jīva* or many souls and *Īs'vara* and the religion of *sarva mukti*, and this end can be realized only by attaining the world of Brahman and His *mukti prasāda* or gift of deliverance. Bhāskara rejects the theory of two Brahmans. He also rejects the theistic idea of *mukti* as the realization of the dependence of the *jīva* on *Īs'vara*, who is absolutely different from it. But he describes two ways to *mukṭi* called *krama mukti* or gradual deliverance and *sadyōmukti* or immediate deliverance. The former is a progressive attainment of Brahman and provides for the theistic temper, and the latter satisfies the monistic yearning for immediate intuition. This interpretation has the advantage of real sympathy for the theistic view, but it strains the text to suit a pre-conceived theory. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* seeks to follow the primary and explicit meaning of *s'āstra* which alone has specialized in the exposition of *mōkṣa* and accepts the literal sense of Brahman being the only Lord of the world or *jagat*. Brahman is the *s'arīrin* of the *ātman*, the life of its life (*ādhāra*), and the inner ruler of the self (*vidhātā*), and the *ātman* exists

and knows that it exists for the satisfaction of Brahman. It is the therefore nothing, has nothing and does nothing by itself. As *Paramātman* alone is the ground of the *ātman* and pulsates through its being, it is nothing without Him. Finite will exists, but has no value. As the inner ruler of the self, Brahman has the will to control all beings and is the real agent of all activity and action, and the *jīva* can do nothing by itself. The self belongs to Brahman and is a means to His satisfaction. Therefore it has nothing for itself. Brahman is Himself the ground and the goal, the end and endeavour. While matter also subserves the divine end, the *mukta* knows the meaning of *svāmitva*, and effaces his self-consciousness by service to the Lord and to the society of free and freed selves. The true value of freedom lies in attuning the finite will to the Infinite and making it His instrument. *Paramapada* is not a society of freed selves, which seek to cooperate with Brahman and help Him in the evolution of His cosmic purpose, nor is it a world suffering from the contradictions and confusion of two wills, finite and infinite, with no chance of harmony. The first view betrays the egoism of the naive theist, and the second, the intellectualism of the speculative monist. The idea of *dāsatva* in the ethical monism of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* does not imply slave-mentality extolled as a spiritual virtue, but brings out the infinite riches of the denial of egoism and attunement of the self to the cosmic purpose of universal redemption. *Mukti* is the realization of the meaning of the relation between the *jīva* and *Īs'vara* enshrined in the *Upaniṣadic* text "Thou art that," and there is more value in abolishing the *ahaṅkāra* of the *jīva* by self-effacement and the surrender of the self to the true Self than in dissolving and annulling the idea of *Īs'vara* and deifying the *jīva*. *Kaiṅkarya rasa* brings out the joy of selfless service, but *kaivalya rasa*

savours of *ātmarati* or delight in the self, and it may lapse into moral stultification and egoism. In attuning his naughted will to that of the *s'ēṣī*, the *mukta* as a modeless mode feels that he is like a lute on which the supreme singer plays. Love is fulfilled in surrender and service and its cosmic value lies in attuning itself to the infinite.

But it is the experience of the bliss of Brahman that expresses the supreme value of *mukti* in the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* sense of the ecstasy of the unitive consciousness[1]. The *mukta* is immersed in the supreme and unsurpassable bliss of *Brahmānubhava* without losing his self-being. It is a state of *sāyujya* in which the unitive experience of bliss is present without the loss of self-existence.[2] *Vēdāntic mukti* is not the cessation of sorrow which is *in vacua*, as in the *Vais'ēṣika* theory, but is the positive experience of *ānanda* which is ineffable and incommunicable. Even the *Upaniṣad* with its genius for explaining *Brahmānubhava* fails in its hedonistic and eudaemonistic description which is unparalleled in mystic power, to measure by a calculus of pleasures the bliss of Brahman, in which speculative thought melts away and expires in enjoyment. *Viṣayānanda* or the delight in the objects of sense due to contacting sense-objects is really pleasant, but transient and trivial, and the thrills arising from excitement exhaust themselves by their very nature. *Vivēkānanda* is the happiness of culture and contentment arising from sweet reasonableness and, though more enduring than pleasure, it has not the intrinsic value of *ātmānanda* or the satisfaction of self-realizedness. But even this state results from self-centredness and is therefore individualistic. *Brahmānanda* is the

[1] *Vē. Sū.*, IV. iv. 21.
[2] vide, Chap. XXII of Vēdānta Dēs'ika's *Rahasyatraya Sāra*.

blessedness of divine communion which passeth all understanding and the *Brahmajñānī* alone can give an experience definition of that exalted state which transcends the imperfect medium of thought and language.[1] The analytic intellect seeks to dissect the soul of such *Brahmarasa* and expresses it diagrammatically, as it were, in *Vēdāntic* language. To the theist *Brahmānanda* is two-sided. It involves two centres of experience and a double fruition, and it admits of qualitative and quantitative difference. Bhāskara expounds it as *ēkībhāva* or the abolition of the *jīva*-consciousness in intent and extent and absorption in the Absolute. The merging of the self in the All-self is like the dissolution of the fragrance of the flower in the air and the melting of the iceberg in the ocean. *Advaitic* bliss transcends the duality of the experient and the experienced object and the delight is not in tasting the *rasa* but in being bliss itself. But on the *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* view of *sāyujya* the soul-hunger of God and the God-hunger of the soul are satisfied, and the separate consciousness of both is swallowed up in the enjoyment of bliss. Speaking of this state, the *Upaniṣad* bursts into ecstasy: "I eat as food him who eats food."[2] "As a man embraced by his beloved wife knows nothing that is without or within, even so the self when embraced by the All-knowing Self knows nothing without and nothing within."[3] Thus in *Brahmānanda*, the experients exist, but their feeling of separateness melts away in the irresistibility of ecstasy. "Even wisdom is swept away and sunk in rapture." In the rapt love of mystic union, the *mukta* is mad with God and sings about His glory and

[1] yatō vācō nivartantē I aprāpya manasā saha I—*Tait*, Ānand. iv.

[2] aham annam annamadantam admi—*Tait. Up.*, Bhṛgu., X.

[3] tad yathā priyayā striyā sampariṣvaktaḥ na bāhyam kiñcana vēda nāntaram ēvam ēvāyam puruṣaḥ prājñēnātmanā sampariṣvaktaḥ na bāhyam kiñcana vēda nāntaram.—*Bṛ. Up.*, VI. iii. 21.

goodness by chanting the songs of the *Sāma Vēda*. The bliss of union is ever fecundative, and it enchances the value of the released state. The bliss of self-realizedness signifies the self that is realized and its value is eternally conserved.

In a true philosophy of religion reality and value go together. The scientist-philosopher who thinks that the universe is indifferent to moral and spiritual values is as one sided as the ethical religionist who accepts the supremacy of faith and fights shy of reason. But the world of facts is also the realm of ends and values. To create a gap between reason and faith is not in the interests of either and this truth is well brought out in the history of western thought as well as in Indian philosophy. Spinoza as a mystic philosopher discovered the futility of following the mathematical method of philosophy, retraced his steps in his Ethics and rehabilitated philosophy. Kant likewise realized the failure of theoretical reason and turned to practical reason and judgment as the way of escape from agnosticism. Indian philosophy has no doubt been relatively free from the conflict between philosophy and religion ; but certain monistic schools have rejected the reality of ethical religion and its ultimate values. S'aṅkara as a metaphysician says that *avidyā* as negation should be negated or stultified ; but, as a believer in *mumukṣutva* and *mukti*, he insists on moral and religious values. Certain Semitic religions, on the other hand, have faith in the supremacy of scriptural values but do not trust the method of philosophy. But a religion which is hostile to metaphysics stifles reason ; man is essentially a thinking being and unless his faith is grounded in philosophy, it cannot claim any stability. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion posits and proves that reality is

realizable and is therefore the home of eternal values. Brahman is the Absolute, and finite thought purified by the *sādhanas* can cross the barriers of finiteness and intuit the Absolute. The *Vēdāntin* as a philosopher can think God's thought after Him and realize His godliness. By knowing Brahman as the reason of the universe, the *jñānī* is freed from worldliness and attains the realm of ethical values.

It is only when the soul reaches perfection in *mukti* that perfect satisfaction arises. The universe as the *līḷā vibhūti* exists not for pleasure but for the moulding of the soul into a *mukta*. *Cit* and *acit* are eternally real and do not admit of degrees of reality. But values admit of levels or degrees. Values have meaning only in relation to the self and the satisfaction of its desires. In the phenomenal world the values of the evolving self are transient and perishing. The values of spiritual life are more stable and permanent than those of the sensuous life; but it is only in *mukti* that the *jīva* is perfected and *brahmanized*. The *mukta* is no longer affected by the flux of *prakṛti* or tainted by evil, error or ugliness. The values of truth, goodness and beauty then attain their highest degree of perfection. *Mukti* is not merely freedom from ignorance, sin and sorrow, but is also the regaining of *Paramapada* which is the realm of eternal values. It is not true to say that values alone survive in the absolute and not persons. The freed self is not a vanishing illusion, nor does it merge in the whole like the dew-drop slipping into the shining sea. Its content is no doubt transmuted; but it is not true to say that it contributes to the whole. The only offering that the freed self makes to Brahman is self-gift without selfishness. Every value is trans-valued and perfected. The self gains itself by renouncing its empirical and exclusive nature,

acquires the colour, flavour and fragrance of Brahman (*Brahma rūpa*, *Brahmarasa* and *Brahmagandha*) and is immersed in its everlasting and ever fecundative bliss. Freed from the shackles of *prakṛti* and the limitations of time, it lives in spaceless space and timeless time, and it is supra-personal, but not impersonal. Brahman, the Absolute, has, in the *nitya vibhūti*, no history [1]; it has "no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, blossom and fruit." In the world of *līlā*, there is endless progress involving endless duration due to the pitfalls and perils of metempsychosis. Infinite becoming is self-contradictory and purposeless, and becoming really presupposes being and a beginning and an end. In *Paramapada*, the *jiva* attains its infinite consciousness and regains the eternal values. Eternity is not the prolongation of the present life, nor is it personal survival, but is a state of self-transcendence, in which the self renounces the phenomenal shows that come and go and realizes its noumenal state.

The world of *Paramapada* is a shining spiritual world.[2] and is made of bliss itself, *aprākṛta*, *paramākās'a* and *ānanda-lōka*. It is the realm of *s'uddhasattva* made of a peculiar kind of matter, which is immutable. It is *ajaḍa* and is self-luminous like *jñāna*, and exists for the enjoyment of the *ātman*, Space and time do not disappear in the Absolute, but are transfigured and contribute to the infinite riches of divine experience. *Paramapada* transcends the world of *prakṛti* or *tamaṣ*, and has more resplendence than that of a million suns and stars. In its purity and perfection, it is beyond the obscuration of *avidyā*, the taint of evil and the stain of ugliness. It is a noumenal realm, which can neither be perceived by the senses

[1] kālam sa pacatē tatra na kālas tatra vai prabhuḥ,—*Mahābhārata*, S'ānti parva, CXC. vi. 9,

[2] jñānānandamayā lōkāḥ.—*S'rī Pañcarātra.*

nor conceived by the spatializing intellect. It cannot be adequately described by *s'āstra* and can only be intuited under the form of eternity by the *nityasūri* or the *mukta*. The supreme beauty of *Paramapada* cannot be adequately portrayed by the divine faculty, of the poet, the painter or the musician. The bliss of *ānandalōka* can be described only by the blissful *mukta*. The allegories employed by Plato and Plotinus to describe the 'ideas' of beauty and the glories of the spiritual worlds are poor symbols of the sublimity enshrined in the mystic language of the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* and the *Vaikuṇtha Gadya* of Rāmānuja. Brahman has His own transcendental nature (*svarūpa*), infinity of perfections (*guṇa*) and supreme unsurpassed form of beauty (*rūpa*), which are alogical, amoral and supra-mystical. Metaphysics deals with what can be known, and that is the world of Brahman; ethics deals with what should be done, and that is *kaiṅkarya* or service; and religion deals with what we may hope for, and that is the attainment of the immortality of bliss. In this way metaphysical knowledge ripens into virtue, and virtue is crowned with happiness. The supreme end of life is the enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman. Logic and ethics have their consummation in aesthetics and mysticism, and the crowning glory of mystic experience is to revel in the beauty of *ānandaloka*. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is the only philosophy of religion that identifies existence and value and defines Brahman as *satyasya satyam* [1] or real reality which *brahmanizes* the *mukta* and imparts its beauty and bliss to him.

Paramapada is the realm of self-luminous *s'uddhasattva*,[2] which is free from the *pariṇāmic* or evolutionary modifications

[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, IV. i. 20 and IV. iii. 6.

[2] svasattābhāsakam satvam guṇasatvād vilakṣanam.—*S'rī Pāñcarātra*.

of *prakṛti* and the contracting influence of its three *guṇas*. It is beyond *prakṛti* and its twenty-three successive emanations, and it is not therefore conditioned by the five elements that compose the cosmic stuff, nor is it affected by the psycho-physical changes of the mind-body of the migrating *jīva*. In *Paramapada*, matter exists, without modification, in an *aprākṛta* or non-material form; but its value in *mukti* is more important than its eternal existence. It shines in its own light as *ajaḍa*, but it exists as a medium and means for the enjoyment or the *mukta*. Beauty consists of form and matter and can never be *nirguṇa* or attributeless. or *niravayava* or formless. Brahman who is *nirguṇa* and *niravayava* wills to be and becomes the Beautiful by creating a body of His own which has divine symmetry, softness,[1] fragrance, colour and eternal youthfulness, with a view to ravishing the bound self, including the *āsura* or demoniac type, out of its fleshly feeling and sinfulness, and imparts His beauty and bliss to the *mukta*. The radiant form of Brahman is bodied forth with matchless lyric beauty in the *Bhāgavata*, the *Vaikuṇtha Gadya* and the *Paramada Sōpāna*. Brahman beautifies, and is beautified by, the whole universe of *cit* and *acit*. The world of nature is His *S'rī Vatsa* or the emblem on His chest; and the spiritual world of the *ātman* adorns His heart as the gem called the *Kaustubha*. While embodiment as the effect of *karma* is an impediment and may even be evil, embodiedness in *Paramapada* is the creative spontaneity of the aesthetic joy of Brahman. The *jñāna* of the *mukta* is all-pervasive; but if he desires the enjoyment of his cosmic freedom with a body, the desire is immediately realized, and he attunes himself to the will of *Īs'vara* as in the waking consciousness of the

[1] *Cf.*, sarvagandhah, sarvarasaḥ.—*Ch. Up.*, III, xiv. 2 and 4.

baddha state [1]. Without a body he enjoys the same freedom divinely created as in the dream state of the *baddha*. In any case the freedom of the *mukta* is no longer obscured by *avidyā* or curtailed by *karma*. He enjoys eternal self-rule and universal sovereignty by the absolute abolition of the egoistic and individualistic standpoint and attunes himself to the redemptive will of *Īs'vara* as the cosmic *s'ēṣī*.

Time does not vanish in the abyss of the Absolute as a stirless state of nothingness, but it enriches the blissful experience of Brahman, which is an eternal now. The *nitya sūri* is the spectator of all time in the supra-temporal state of *Paramapada*. The meaning and value of time in the *Vis'iṣṭāvaitic* system can be determined by distinguishing the three meanings of time expounded by western philosophers, namely, endless duration in the phenomenal realm, the eternal that transcends the temporal process, and the eternal that is in the temporal and beyond it. According to the first interpretation, time in the world of sense is finite and relative, but is not subjective, nor is it an internal sense, which is illusory. Time is the succession of events and not a series of exclusive moments. Nothing is static, and everything is in a state of ceaseless becoming. Things pass away and perish, as they come into being. Worlds are dissolved periodically at the end of each *kalpa* or epoch, and even Brahmās come and go in the ever-changing universe. The destruction and withdrawal of the cosmic process is itself conditioned by *kāla* or time. The time sense varies with the process of the suns and other celestial bodies, and the infinite time taken up by the passing away of the cosmos is but a day for Brahmā, and even

[1] tanvabhāvē sandhyāvad upapattēḥ.—*Vē. Sū.*, IV. iv. 13.
Bhāvē jāgradvat.—*Vē. Sū.*, IV. iv. 14.

the cosmic will of *Īs'vara* is self-conditioned by *kāla*. But this view is not tenable, as pure duration without a being that endures is an abstraction. To say that time is beginningless is to be entangled in the fallacy of infinite regress, and endless process is self-contradictory. The view that being changes is unthinkable. Therefore the monist goes to the other extreme, when he contends that being is real and becoming is illusory. Thus, according to the second view, the eternal is pure being and the temporal is an illusion that exists but is not real. Progress and regress are self-discrepant, and they cannot be ascribed to pure being. The absolute has no history, and reality does not progress, though there may be progress in reality. Reality sublates and transcends the three-dimensional process. *Mukti* thus connotes the non-existence of time and the self-identity of Brahman. Whatever is is and whatever is not is not.

Vis'iṣṭādvaita gives a different exposition of the nature of time. It steers clear of the two extremes of endlessness and eternity by affirming the eternal as immanent in the temporal and transcending it. The *līlā vibhūti*, the world of splendour which exists for the sport of the Lord, is the play of the eternal in the temporal and the *nitya vibhūti* or eternal splendour of *Paramapada* is time as eternity. The former is the realm of *karma* or causal necessity without any contingency, and is the sphere of soul-making and is not a realm of relativity rooted in *avidyā*. The finite self feels its finitude, and seeks freedom from the passing shows of empirical life by attaining immortality. As the eternal alone gives meaning to the temporal process and is its final consummation, the reality of the progressive attainment of eternal life is assured. Moral and spiritual endeavour is a *sādhana* for such self-transcendence. Truth leads to the more of itself and is the passage of

the self from the *līlā vibhūti* to the *nitya vibhūti* which is the infinitely more glorious 'yonder.' In the former, time is finite and affected by the *guṇas*, while in the latter, it is not causally related, but is infinite and beyond the plane of space-time. *Saṃsāra* is determined by the time series, but *mukti* determines the time series by the self gaining mastery over it. The Lord is the link of love between the two realms, and soul-making is the goal of cosmic *līlā*, and, in the attainment of eternal life, the self transcends the transient dimensions. The *mukta* views everything under the form of eternity, and his bliss of *sāyujya* is ever creative and is an eternal now. It is like a symphony in which each note sweetens the whole effect and is sweetened by it; but no analogy drawn from human experience can adequately bring out the ecstasy of eternal life.

The nature of *mukti* is so rich and varied in content that it cannot be exhausted by philosophic labels and formulae. Brahman is the *sat* without a second, but *Brahmānubhava* differs with different *muktas*, and this truth brings out the uniqueness of each experience and its universality. The *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* (III. xiv. 1) expounds it in the light of the principle of *tat kratu nyāya*. The *mukta* is free to realize the infinite in infinite ways, and this freedom is determined by his own will. Every meditation on Brahman ends in the attainment of Brahman. The nature of what is attained in *mukti* is determined by the nature of the meditation of the *mumukṣu* (*Ve. Sū.*, IV. iii. 14). In discussing the value of the thirty-two meditations on Brahman, the *Sūtrakāra*, in III. iii. 57, raises the important question whether they are all compulsory or optional and decides in favour of the latter alternative on account of the identity of the result. The methods and the starting points may vary with the

psychological variations of *mumukṣutva*, but the *Vēdāntic* goal is the same, namely, the intuition of Brahman, which is of the nature of supreme unsurpassable Bliss. Brahman, as the *Vākyakāra* says,[1] has qualities, because the meditation on Brahman defines His qualities. The determining attributes of Brahman are *satyatva*, *jñāṛtva*, *anantatva*, *apahatapāpmatva* and *ānanda* and as every essential quality connotes the subject of which it is the definition, it follows that every meditation includes these qualities and that Brahman is their subject. The other ideas of God like *saulabhya* and *saus'īlya* are derived from the definition and refer only to specific *upāsanas* or forms of meditation (III. iii. 11 *et seq*). Thus every *upāsanā* has its adequacy and efficacy in securing the stability of *mukti*. Brahman is the goal of the spiritual endeavour of the *mumukṣu*, and every specific experience of *mukti* is the immediate experience of Brahman itself. The *mumukṣu* may be a *jñānī* or metaphysician interested in the unitive consciousness of *avibhāga*, *vis'iṣṭa aikya* or *Brahmabhāva*, or a *yōgin* who delights in intuiting Brahman as his inner light in which the flickerless flame of *ātma jyōtis* shines in *param jyōtis* or the boundless light of Brahman. The man of active temperament dedicates himself to selfless service to the Lord and His devotees and prefers *kaiṅkarya rasa* to *Brahmabhāva*. The mystic is drawn by *prēmā* and thrilled by the touches of the alluring beauty of Brahman, which ravishes even the ascetic and the dialectician, and changes the *jñānīs* or *ṛṣis* of Daṇḍaka into the *Gōpīs* of Bṛndāvana. The *mumukṣu* meditates on some single quality of Brahman according to his inclination and even the eternal seers enjoy only one aspect of the divine nature. The bliss of Brahman is, however, irresistible and every Vēdāntin seeks *Ānanda* as the supreme end and aim of life.

[1] *S. B. E.*, XLVIII. p. 99.

CHAPTER XX

A BRIEF HISTORY OF *VIS'IṢṬĀDVAITIC VAIṢṆAVISM*

A BRIEF history of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* and *Vaiṣṇavism* in general is now attempted before the concluding chapter is taken up, as it throws light on the practical value of its philosophy. *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* is as old as Hinduism and it has been extolled through the ages as the religion of redemption. *Vaiṣṇavism* connotes the religion in which Viṣṇu, the eternally pure and perfect, enters into the history of humanity with a view to redeeming the bound self from sinfulness and selfishness and *vaiṣṇavize* its nature. *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* makes the meaning more explicit by defining the dual function of Viṣṇu as *S'riyaḥpati*, which consists in universal redemption. While *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* defines Brahman as the Godhead that creates, sustains and destroys the universe with a view to *brahmanizing* the finite self, *Vaiṣṇavism*, as its religious aspect, identifies the same Godhead as unity in trinity with Viṣṇu who pervades all *jīvas* and *vaiṣṇavizes* their nature. In the history of Indian philosophy, *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic Vaiṣṇavism* occupies a central position both as philosophy and as religion, as a meeting of the extremes of monism and pluralism and of non-dualism and theism. Every system of faith is, historically speaking, a response to the needs of the

age which gave it birth or brought it to the forefront and, from this standpoint, it may be proved that S'aṅkara came to correct the atheistic teaching of Buddhism by re-establishing the Hindu view of the eternity of the *Vēda* and restoring the *Vēdāntic* truths of *Brahmavidyā*. Though S'aṅkara accepted all the six faiths prevalent in his age, he tried to abolish the evil practices connected with *vāmācāra* and prefer the *sātvika* faith in *Bhagavān*, *bhakti* and the *bhāgavata* religion. At any rate, his practical *Advaita* is not incompatible with *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. But the God-destroying dialectics of *Māyāvāda* dormant in S'aṅkara's theory became pronounced in certain schools of post-S'aṅkara *Advaita* and the time spirit required a philosopher that could rescue *Vēdānta* from the evils of pan-illusionism and that was the mission of Rāmānuja. Though Rāmānuja formulated *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, he was not its founder as his mission was only to systematize the traditional teachings of the *ṛṣis* and the *Āḷvārs* as expounded by Nāthamuni and Āḷavandār. Like post-S'aṅkara *Advaita*, post-Rāmānuja *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* gave rise to different schools of *Vaiṣṇavism* like the *Vaḍakalai* sect represented by Vēdānta Dēs'ika and the *Tenkalai* sect represented by Piḷḷailōkācārya. In spite of the varieties of *Vaiṣṇavite* teachings, their common aim is devotion to Viṣṇu as the All-Self and Redeemer of all.

The varieties of *Vaiṣṇavite* experience by the *ṛṣis*, the *Bhāgavatas* and the *Āḷvārs* afford the data for the formulation of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, and the twin truths handed down traditionally by the *ṛṣis* and the *Āḷvārs* are embodied in the system and are known as *Ubhaya Vēdānta*. It is wrong to say that it is an amalgam of two different cultures or a fusion of the divergent currents of philosophy and popular cults. It is essentially a *S'ārīraka S'āstra* or synoptic philosophy whose aim is not only

to seek the whole or soul of knowledge but to extend the hospitality of its divine ideas to all humanity. While *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* stresses the metaphysical side, *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* emphasizes the moral and mystic sides, and the two are inseparable and really one. It is summed up by Nammāḷvār in the opening verse of his *Tiruvāimoḷi*, 'He who is Bliss (*uyarnalam*) imparts the illumining and illuminating *bhakti* (*matinalam*) to the *mumukṣu*.' *Bhakti* is more than the intellectual love of God, as it is the life of man in the love of God and includes philosophic knowledge and religious feeling. The history of *Vaiṣṇavism* is mainly the biography of its best men, the *Āḷvārs* and the *Ācāryas* or the seers and the prophets, recorded in its *Guruparamparas*. Though the mystic forgets himself in God and the *Ācārya* works for world-welfare, the two are not different, as, in *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism*, love of God and service to humanity go together. Nammāḷvār is the chief of the *Āḷvārs* who directly intuited Brahman, and he is in a line with Vāmadēva of the *S'rutis* and S'uka and Prahlāda of the *Bhāgavata*; Rāmānuja is the foremost of the *Vēdantic* exponents of the *Vis'īṣṭādvaitic* system. The biography of seers and prophets is often naturally mixed up with the record of the miracles wrought by them and their mystic experiences. But to the student of *Vēdānta*, the spiritual side alone is relevant and not the supernatural, nor even the historic. It is, however, desirable that the lives and teachings of the *Āḷvārs* and the *Ācāryas* are briefly sketched as a background to the study of *Vis'īṣṭādvaita* or Rāmānuja *dars'ana*.

PRE-RĀMĀNUJA VIS'IṢṬĀDVAITA

It is a cardinal teaching of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* that God who is transcendental Love incarnates again and again into

history without renouncing His infinity [1] with a view not only to redeeming the wicked man from his career of wickedness, but to seeking the *jñānī* or philosopher-mystic [2] who is His very self or *ātmā*. The *Vēdas*, the *Itihāsas*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Pāñcarātra* and the *Dramiḍa Vēda* are successive revelations of the redemptive love of God. This truth is well brought out in the divine life of the *Āḷvārs* as revealed by their inspired poetic utterances. The prophecy of the *Bhāgavata* that in the *Kali Yuga*, the *ṛṣis* devoted to Nārāyaṇa would be born on the banks of the Cauvery, the Tāmraparṇī and the Pālār in Drāviḍadēsa or in the land of Agastya [3] was fulfilled in the lives and teachings of the *Āḷvārs*. Tradition ascribes the age of the *Āḷvārs*, twelve in number, to the beginning of the *Kali Yuga* (more than 5,000 years ago) ; but modern historical research assigns it to the period between the second century A.D. and the eighth century A.D. The determination of the exact dates of their birth is outside the scope of this work, which is concerned only with their divine life. The *Āḷvārs* were God-intoxicated mystics and their one and only aim in life was to contact God in His beauteous *aprākṛta* form and communicate the joy of their communion with Him to humanity. They were specialists in spirituality to whom the only proof of the being of God was being in God and holding converse with Him. They had an insight into the nature of Nārāyaṇa as their inner self and in their religious outlook they saw Nārāyaṇa pervading all things. They insisted on the need for inner purity and

[1] svam ēva rūpam tattatsajātīyasamsthānam sva svabhāvam ajahadēva kurvan tēṣu tēṣu lōkēṣvavatīryāvatīrya--Rāmānuja's *Gītābhāṣya*, Introduction.
janma karma ca mē divyam.—*B. G.*, IV. 9.

[2] paritrāṇāya sādhūnām.—*B. G.*, IV. 8.

[3] Book XI, Chap. V, verses 38-40 as quoted also by Vēdānta Dēs'ika in the introductory chapter of his *Rahasyatraya Sāra*.

personal experience and, without in any way breaking with traditional and institutional faith, disseminated spiritual knowledge to all without distinction of birth and status in life and thus revitalized Hinduism. Though they were born into different castes and at different times, they all had the same instinct for the infinite, lived, moved and had their being in divine love or *Bhagavat-prēmā* and poured forth their experiences through Tamil *pās'urams* or hymns. They were all messengers of God who spread the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* gospel that Brahman, the *s'arīrin* of all, has the chief quality of *saulabhya* even on the perceptual level and that by rooting out *ahaṅkāra* and by self-surrender to His love, every man can attain *mukti*. Every man is the son of God and can attain salvation by seeking God and responding to His love. The highest end of life is not even *mukti* in the world yonder, but is *bhakti* here and now, because love is love for ever, absolute, unconditioned and eternal. Man's only responsibility in life is response to the love of God. The lofty view of *Vēdāntic* philosophy was thus turned into *Vaisṇavite* religion ; and instead of vivisecting Hinduism into the domain of philosophy for the few and religion for the many, this process vivifies and invigorates Hinduism and makes it live for ever as the philosophy of religion.

Though all the *Ālvārs* had a genius for God, each gave poetic expression to his experience in his own way. The earliest of the *Ālvārs* were a trio called respectively Poigai, Bhūtam and Pēi. They were endowed with the highest *yōgic* insight. They were born in the same month and in the same year on consecutive days in Conjeeveram, Mahābalipuram and Mailāpūr respectively. The most inspiring episode in their life is the story of their meeting in a narrow room in Tirukōilūr,

a place in South Arcot District. Having sought shelter in a narrow passage on a dark rainy night, the three were squeezed together in that narrow room, where one alone could lie, two could sit or three stand. Suddenly they all felt a strange Presence and to discern it they lit their lamps of spiritual wisdom and were gifted with a vision of the beatific form of God who was pressing them so closely. At once they broke into song and the realization of each *Ālvār* took the form of a *Tiruvandādi* of one hundred verses. These are the earliest of the *Prabandhas* addressed mostly to the Lord of the Seven Hills as the God of Gods. Tirumaḷis'aiāḷvār who came next was so called because he was born in Tirumaḷis'ai, a village near Madras. By a process of philosophic and spiritual induction, he intuited the supremacy of Nārāyaṇa and he is well-known for his monotheistic faith and fervour and *yōgic* introversion. His two works are known as the *Nānmukan Tiruvandādi* and the *Tiruccanda Viruttam*. The religion of *bhakti* sown by the first three *Ālvārs* blossomed [1] in the fourth and came to full fruition in Nammāḷvār. Nammāḷvār, also known as Māran, S'aṭhakōpa and Parāṅkus'a, is venerated as the super-mystic of *Vaiṣṇavism* and its super-*prapanna* or founder of the *prapatti* school. As already mentioned, he was born in Kurukūr, now known after him as Āḷvārtirunagari, in Tinnevelly on the banks of the Tāmraparṇī. Like S'uka, he was conceived and born in godliness. With his instinct for the infinite, his hunger and thirst were only for God. His divine love was a divine gift and he was immersed in it for sixteen years at the foot of a tamarind tree till he came down to the waking state and gave articulate expression to his infinite *avā* or *prēmā* in the soul-stirring poems known as the *Tīruviruttam*, the

[1] anbilanri āzhiānai yāvarkāṇavallarē ? (Who can see him except by love ?)

Tiruvās'iriyam, the *Periya Tiruvandādi* and the *Tiruvāimoḷi*. The love of God can come only from God, the infinite, and the *Āḷvār* says that his *Tiruvāimoḷi* was really the word of God expressed through the instrumentality of the human medium. The *Tiruvāimoḷi* is extolled by Vēdānta Dēs'ika as the *Dramiḍōpaniṣad* and is unsurpassed in mystic literature for its spiritual depth and fervour. The *Tiruvāimoḷi* is, in fact equated with *Vēdānta*, and each is interpreted in terms of the other and the two are fused into a single system which enables the philosopher-mystic to realize the alogical state of divine life transcending the limits of linguistics and logic. Nammāḷvār is the very heart of *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* mysticism and is described symbolically as the soul, of which the first three *Āḷvārs* are the mind and the other *Āḷvārs*, the body. It was given to Madhurakavi Āḷvār to discover Nammāḷvār and though his only work, the *Kaṇṇinuñciruttāmbu*, is a short poem of eleven verses on Nammālvār, it forms an integral part of the four thousand *Divya Prabandhas* and brings out the veneration in which the *Āḷvār* was held by *S'rī Vaiṣṇavas*.

Kulas'ēkhara, who ruled over three principalities on the west coast (Kolli, Kūḍal and Kōḷi ; Cēra, Pāṇḍya and Cola), became an *Āḷvār* by the intensity of his devotion to God. His 105 verses are grouped together as the *Perumāḷ Tirumoḷi* and are noted for their passionate fervour towards God and godly men. A poor Brahmin of S'rīvilliputtūr, Viṣṇucitta by name, who spent his time in offering flowers to God, was gifted with divine lore and love and is known as Periyāḷvār. He was able to establish in a polemic discussion at the Pāṇḍyan king's court, the supremacy of *Vaiṣṇavite* monotheism. He was so much immersed in the love of child Kṛṣṇa that he forgot His divinity and

tended Him with the tenderness of Yas'ōdā. This kind of *bhakti* is known in *Vaiṣṇava* mysticism as *vātsalya bhāva.* His songs called the *Periyālvār Tirumoli* are the outpourings of his Kṛṣṇa love which are as soul-stirring as the language of S'uka in the *Bhāgavata.* Periyāḷvār adopted as his daughter Āṇḍāḷ or Gōdā who had a miraculous birth like Sītā. Her heart was set on wedding S'rī Kṛṣṇa and her pining for love and her assaults on the Beloved as described in her *Tiruppāvai* and *Tirumolī* can bear comparison only with the mystic ardour of the *Gōpīs.* The *Tiruppāvai* portrays, with rare lyrical beauty, the scene of her approaching the Sleeping Beauty of Bṛndāvan at day dawn with other damsels and awakening Him from His strange sleep. The Lord of Love could not resist her maddening love and their spiritual marriage took place in the shrine of S'rīraṅgam when she rushed into the arms of Love and was lost in the bliss of communion.

Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi Āḷvār, in his moving hymns, the *Tiruppaḷḷi Eḷucci* and the *Tirumālai,* seeks to awaken the Lord of Raṅga or the theatre of *līlā,* from His *yōganidrā* and make Him respond to the call of *bhakti.* He exhorts humanity to give up the career of sin and seek the redemptive love of Raṅga. True to his name, he cleansed himself with the holy dust of the feet of devotees when they entered the shrine of the Holy and effaced himself in service. Tirupāṇāḷvār was a *pañcama* born near S'rīraṅgam and, in his ten immortal verses beginning with *Amalan,* he adores God as the Holy, the Pure and the Perfect (*amalan, vimalan, nirmalan*) and feels blessed by the fact that divine love invaded his inner being and cleansed him of all sin. Tradition has it that the Lord of Raṅga commanded the temple priest in a dream to carry the *Āḷvār* on his shoulders

from the outskirts of the city to His inner shrine whence his name *Munivāhanan.* The next *Āḷvār* was Tirumaṅgai Mannan, also called Kaliyan and Parakālan, who was born in a *Veḷḷāla* family in Ṣīyālī. He was a military chief who was weaned away from his worldly career by the redemptive grace of God. In his poetic works called the *Periya Tirumoḷi*, the *Tirukkuruntāṇḍakam*, the *Tiruneḍuntāṇḍakam*, the *S'iriya Tirumaḍal*, the *Periya Tirumaḍal* and the *Eḷukūṛṛirukkai*, which are extolled as the six *Vēdāṅgas* of the *Drāviḍa Vēda*, he sings the glory of God as the permanent incarnation of mercy in all His temples from Badarināth to Tiruppuḷḷāṇi near Rāmes'varam. He begins his *Periya Tirumoḷi* in his characteristic way with a confession of his previous sinfulness followed by the feeling of security obtained by uttering the holy name of Nārāyaṇa, and ends it with the joy of *mukti* or freedom from the fear of *saṃsāra.*

The hymns of the *Āḷvārs,* four thousand in number, were collected and collated by Nāthamuni in the manner of the four *Vēdas* arranged by Vyāsa, and are called the *Divya Prabhanda* or Tamil *Vēda,* and they contain the quintessence of the *Upaniṣads.* The first part includes the hymns of Periyāḷvār, Āṇḍāḷ, Kulas'ēkhara, Tirumaḷis'ai, Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi and Madhurakavi; the second consists of three works of Tirumaṅgai Āḷvar; the third is the *Tiruvāimoḷi* of Nammāḷvar; and the fourth is made up of the three *Andādis* of the first three *Āḷvārs,* one *Andādi* of Tirumaḷis'ai, three poems of Nammāḷvār and three of Tirumaṇgai Āḷvār. Vēdānta Dēs'ika includes the *Rāmānuja Nūṛrandādi* in the Four Thousand, but the *Tenkalai Ācāryas* compute 4,000 without the *Rāmānuja Nūṛrandādi.*

The *Āḷvārs* are esteemed for their austerity and self-renouncement and for their missionary zeal in promoting the spiritual walfare of all beings. They do not claim to be specially chosen by God with any special covenant, as they regard every man as the son of God who can eventually attain salvation. To them the only true miracle is the miracle of mercy or *aruḷ*, and it is almighty and accessible to all.

While the *Āḷvārs* were divers into divinity, the *Ācāryas* that followed them became the expositors of the *Āḷvārs'* experience and the apostles of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* as the system is now known. Their task was to interpret it in terms of *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* thought and *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* philosophy in terms of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* and spread the gospel of *prapatti* among all persons. They taught that Brahman is the *s'arīrin* of all persons and things and though He is the One without a second metaphysically, He also exists as S'rīman Nārāyaṇa in the interests of world redemption. It is untenable to say that *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* has a South Indian origin; as it has its eternal foundation in the law of love and is not limited by geographical and historical barriers. This truth is borne out by the life and teachings of Nāthamuni, the founder of the *Ubhaya Vēdānta* school and first pontiff of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism.* He was a descendant of the *Bhāgavata* immigrants from the Gangetic valley to the south who came to disseminate the *Bhāgavata* religion of *bhakti.* He was born at Mannārguḍi in the South Arcot District in 824 A.D. and even in his youth he was given to *yōgic* introversion and became a *muni.* Tradition ascribes to him the miraculous discovery of the lost *Tiruvāimoḷi* of Nammāḷvār and then of the entire *Prabandha.* While at Kumbakōṇam, he happened to hear the recital of the soul-stirring hymns of Nammāḷvār beginning with

Ārāvamudē, a word which connotes the immortal bliss of Brahman or divine deliciousness. The ascetic then realized the sweetness of those divine songs and became eager to recover the whole work. He went to Tirunagari where the whole *Prabandha* was miraculously revealed to him by the *Ālvār* himself after the recital of the verses beginning with *Kaṇṇinuñciruttāmbu* sung by Madhurakavi Āḷvār about Nammāḷvār. Nāthamuni grouped the *Prabandha* on the *Vēdic* model into four parts, each containing nearly one thousand stanzas. The recitation of the *Prabandhas* was made an integral part of temple worship at S'rīraṅgam and this practice is even now followed in all *S'rī Vaiṣṇava* temples. This innovation effected a silent revolution in temple worship, as it raised the status of the *Prabandha* to the level of the *Vēda* and liberalized the meaning of Revelation. Nāthamuni's *Nyāya Tattva*, which is now lost, was the first modern treatise on *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and it was elaborated by later *ācāryas*. A few quotations from it are given in the *Nyāya Siddāñjana* of Vēdānta Dēs'ika. It is said that Nāthamuni knew of a secret *yōga* which had the ease and efficacy of securing *mukti* with minimum endeavour and that he was anxious to communicate it to his grandson Āḷavandār. But Āḷavandār could not meet his grand-father's disciple at the appointed time and so the precious *yōga* was lost to humanity. Nāthamuni devoted all his time in his old age to the practice of *samādhi* and passed away in 920 A.D. He was succeeded by Uyyakkoṇḍār or Puṇḍarīkākṣa and he by Maṇakkālnambi or Rāma Mis'ra.

The next important milestone in the history of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* is marked by the life and teachings of Āḷavandār or Yāmunācārya, the grandson of Nāthamuni. Even as a boy, he showed his prodigious learning and skill when he accepted

the challenge of Ākkiāḷvān, the court Paṇḍit of the Cōḷa king made to his *guru* and easily vanquished him in the learned assembly of the king by a clever puzzle. He was at once greeted by the queen as "Āḷavandār" for having conquered the proud poet, and was granted a portion of the kingdom according to the terms of the polemic duel. He lived a life of luxurious ease, when a sudden change came over him after an interview with the old teacher, Rāma Mis'ra, who intimated to him the news of the patrimony bequeathed to him by his grandfather in the form of a váluable treasure imbedded between two rivers. He eagerly followed the *guru* to take possession of the treasure, and when he was shown the shining shrine at S'rīraṅgam, he became converted, was overjoyed and took *sannyāsa.* His whole life was thereafter dedicated to spirituality and service, the twin ideals of a true *Vaiṣṇava*, and he made S'rīraṅgam a veritable *Vaikuṇṭha* on earth. As a philosopher, his main task was the criticism of *Advaita*, and he was an eminent controversialist and author of valuable treatises on *Vēdānta.* His famous work, the *Siddhi Traya* explains the main teachings of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, following the tradition of Bōdhāyana, Dramiḍa, and Ṭaṅka and in accordance with logical thinking ; it consists of three sections—*Ātma Siddhi Īs'vara Siddhi* and "*Samvit Siddhi*." His masterly summary in the *Gītārtha Saṅgraha* of the truths of the *Gītā* is a luminous exposition in about thirty *s'lōkas* of the nature of *prakṛti*, *puruṣa* and *Puruṣōttama* and of the need for *bhakti* and *prapatti* as the supreme means to *mōkṣa.* It was later developed by Rāmānuja and further elaborated by Vedānta Dēs'ika.

[1] It is further summarized in the verse of that work as follows :
" svadharmajñānavairāgyasādhyabhaktyaikagōcaraḥ I
Nārāyaṇah param brahma gītāsāstrē samīritaḥ II'

In his *Āgamaprāmāṇya*, he controverts the conclusion of the *Advaitin* that the *Pāñcarātra*, as expounded in the *Sātvata* and the *Pauṣkara Saṃhitas*, has no *Vedic* authority and that its teaching is opposed to *Vēdānta*. As the Word of Nārāyaṇa, it contains the essentials of *Vēdānta*, is accepted by the *Sūtrakāra* and extolled by him in the *Mahābhārata*. Owing to its comprehensive definition of Brahman as Vāsudēva who is the same as *Bhagavān* or the God of religion, and its exalted moral or *sātvika* ideal of conduct which explains every act of duty as the adoration of Brahman, it is *Vēdānta* applied to practical life. Says Thibaut: "The *Sūtrakāra* closes the polemical section of the second chapter with a defence of the doctrine which, in spite of objections, has to be viewed as the true one." But really there are no objections to the *tantra*, as the forms of Vāsudēva are His incarnational manifestations and not emanations and as the eternity of the self is nowhere rejected. The *Ekāyana S'ākha* from which the system is deduced is traced to the *S'ukla* (white) *Yajur Vēda* and the moral and spiritual austerity of life led by the *Ēkāyana* is evident in his daily conduct. The five-fold *yājña* consisting of *abhigamana*, *upādāna*, *ijyā*, *svādhyāya* and *yōga* is nothing but the dedication of the daily conduct to the indwelling Deity. True *yajña* is but the killing of egoism and the offering of the self to God. Āḷavandār's *Stōtra-ratna*, a master-piece of lyrical devotion, reveals his discerning faith in Nārāyaṇa and S'rī and the intense humility of the philosopher-devotee who pours forth his heart-felt *bhakti* in soul-stirring verses to which there is no parallel in *Stōtra* literature. In praise of S'rī or Lakṣmī, Āḷavandār sang a separate poem of four *s'lōkas*, which, for that reason, is known as *Catus'lōkī*, and it is the earliest of the *stōtras* sung about S'rī and furnishes the foundation and basis of later

works on *S'rī Tattva* such as those of Āḻvān, Bhaṭṭar and Vēdānta Dēs'ika. Another work, *Puruṣa Nirṇaya*, is also ascribed to Ālavandār. His disciples areb elieved to have been fifteen in number, of whom five are said to have taught Rāmānuja, the next great *ācārya*.

RĀMĀNUJA

Rāmānuja was born in S'rīperumbūdūr near Kāñci in the year 1017 A.D. as the son of Āsūri Kēsava Sōmayājī and Kāntimatī, sister of S'rīsaila Pūrṇa, the grandson of Yāmunācārya. From his childhood he showed signs of *Vēdāntic* genius and he was sent to Kāñci to have a course of studies in *Vēdānta* under the great *Advaita* teacher Yādavaprakās'a. It is said that his teachings did not satisfy the budding *Vis'iṣṭādvaitin*. One day, when Yādava explained the *Taittirīya* text "*satyam, jñānam, anantam Brahma*" in terms of absolute identity, the disciple felt that identity was no explanation at all and reconstrued the text by saying that Brahman is and has *satyam, jñānam* and *anantam* as His essential ontological attributes. The *guru's* exposition at another time, of the *Upaniṣadic* description "*kapyāsam*" of the lotus to which the beauteous eyes of *Bhagavān* were compared by translating that expression as the red posteriors of the monkey, brought hot tears of grief to the eyes of Rāmānuja, and he immediately corrected the ugly analogy by giving the true meaning of that term as the well developed lotus that blossoms at day-dawn.[1] These reinterpretations aroused the anger and jealousy of the teacher who, in consultation with some trusted disciples, arranged for a pilgrimage to Benares with the evil idea of drowning Rāmānuja in the Ganges and attributing it to

[1] Gambhīrāmbhas samudbhūta sumṛṣṭa nāla ravikara vikasita puṇḍarika. . . .

accident. On the way, Rāmānuja was apprised of the conspiracy and he escaped at dead of night while they were passing through a wilderness. Weary and foot-sore, Rāmānuja wandered several days till a hunter and a huntress met him and offered to take him to Kāñci, which they said was their destination too. When they were very near Kāñci, the couple suddenly disappeared after asking Rāmānuja for some water and on his looking around, the lofty towers of the temple of Lord Varadarāja in Kāñci greeted his wondering eyes. Rāmānuja at once realized that Lord Varada and His Consort had rescued him in that miraculous manner and as they had asked for water he made it a point from that day onwards to fetch a potful every day from a well near the spot where They disappeared, to be used for Their daily *pūjā*. Yādava later on became a disciple of Rāmānuja. At this time, Saint Tirukkacci Nambi had daily contact and converse with the Lord, and Rāmānuja came under his spiritual influence.

Rāmānuja never met Āḷavandār face to face though the latter had seen Rāmānuja and, unwilling to disturb his studies, had blessed him from a distance. Five of Āḷavandār's disciples, as already stated, imparted the teachings of Āḷavandār to young Rāmānuja who was to become the chief Expositor of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. Mahāpūrṇa or Periyanambi was Rāmānuja's principal *ācārya* who initiated him into the meaning of the *Dvaya Mantra* at Madhurāntakam. Under Gōṣṭīpūrṇa (Tirukkōṭṭiyūr Naṃbi), Rāmānuja learnt the *rahasyārthas* or the meaning and significance of the *rahasya mantras* which play a very important part in the life and training of a *S'rī Vaiṣṇava*. From Tirumālaiyāṇḍān and Āḷavandārāḷvān Rāmānuja learnt the *Tiruvāimoḷi* and from Tirumalai Naṃbi, *S'rīmad Rāmāyaṇa*. The truths of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism*

communicated by Lord Varada to Tirukkacci Nambi were also duly imparted to him : " I am the supreme truth, the way and the goal. The world of souls is different from Me and depends on Me as its source and sustenance. *Prapatti* is the way to salvation." Thus equipped with the knowledge of spiritual truths and the *sādhanas* to *mukti* gained from specialists, Rāmānuja became qualified to enter on his mission of spreading the gospel of *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic Vaiṣṇavism* and to become a world teacher. To dedicate himself wholly to the cause of religion and the service of humanity, he joined the *sannyāsa* order and became *Yatirāja* or the prince of *sannyāsins* on account of his austere and ascetic life. While he settled down at S'rīraṅgam and prepared himself to carry out his mission, he had to meet an *Advaitic* controversialist, Yajñamūrtī by name, and after seventeen days' disputation the opponent was defeated.

He started on a pilgrimage round the country from Rāmēs'varam to Badarināth by the west coast and returned *via* the east coast. With his ever faithful disciple Kūrēs'a (Kūrattāḷvān) he reached S'rīnagar and secured a manuscript copy of the *Bōdhāyana Vṛtti*, which Kūrēs'a, with his prodigious memory, was able to learn by heart at the very first reading. He was thus enabled to bring out his *S'rī Bhāṣya* by literally following tradition and is said to have earned the title of " Bhāṣyakāra " in Kāṣmīr from Sarasvatī herself. At this time occurred the persecution of the *Vaiṣṇavas* by the Cōḷa king, Kulōttuṅga Cōḷa I, who, in his bigoted zeal for the spread of *S'aivism*, tried to repress the dissenters by capital punishment. As Kūrēs'a and the venerable Mahāpūrṇa refused to change their faith, their eyes were plucked out. Rāmānuja's retirement to Mysore at this critical period was an

epoch in its religious history, as it led to the conversion of a large number of Jains and also of Biṭṭideva, the king of the Hōys'ālas, followed by the construction in 1099 of the city of Mēlkōt and the consecration of a temple for S'elva Piḷḷai. His return to S'rīraṅgam in 1118 after an absence of two decades was hailed with joy by the whole *S'rī Vaiṣṇava* community and the remaining years of his life were devoted to the consolidation of his missionary work by organizing temple worship and establishing seventy-four spiritual centres in different parts of the country, presided over by his disciples, to popularize *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. He passed away in 1137 full of honours after a long span of 120 years.[1]

The works of Rāmānuja are as valuable as his life, and they were the fulfilment of his promise in youth to carry out the message of Āḷavandār to systematize the whole teaching of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* in its metaphysical, moral and mystical aspects. In his *Vēdārtha Saṅgraha*, he analyses the defects of *Advaita*, *Bhēdābhēda* and *S'aivism* and harmonizes the apparently conflicting texts of the *Upaniṣads* by his foundational principle of the *s'arīra-s'arīrī* relation. The *Vēdānta Sāra* and the *Vēdānta Dīpa* are short treatises on the *Sūtras* and bring to light the essentials of *Vēdānta*. But his *magnum opus* is the immortal *S'rī Bhāṣya* which is an authoritative exposition of the *Sūtras* as *S'ārīraka S'āstra* in the truest sense of the term.[2] His *Gītā Bhāṣya* is a development of the *Gītārtha Saṅgraha* of Āḷavandār and explains the building up of *bhakti* and constructs a ladder as it were

[1] For a full account of his life and teaching, the reader is referred to the contemporary work of Amudanār's *Nūṟṟandādi* in Tamil, Vēdānta Dēs'ika's *Yatirājasaptati* and Maṇavāḷa Mahāmunigaḷ's *Yatirāja Viṁs'ati*.

[2] The *S'rutaprakās'ika* is a commentary on the *S'rī Bhāṣya* composed later by Sudars'ana Bhaṭṭa; the *Bhāva Prakās'ika* is a gloss on this work; and the *Tattva Ṭīkā* is a fuller gloss by Vēdānta Dēs'ika.

from the world of *prakṛti* to the realm of *Puruṣōttama*. In his *S'araṇāgati Gadya*, Rāmānuja gives a classic exposition of the nature and value of *prapatti*. The *S'rīraṅga Gadyam* reveals the devotional yearning of Rāmānuja to the Lord of S'rīraṅgam which is praised as *Vaikuṇṭha* on earth. The *Vaikuṇṭha Gadya* is a rapturous outpouring on the transcendental beauty and bliss of *Vaikuṇṭha*. In another prose work called the *Nityaṃ*, Rāmānuja elaborates the ideal of the daily life of a true *paramaikāntin*. The *Ārāyirappaḍi*, the first *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* commentary on the *Tiruvāimoḷi* of Nammāḷvār, is traced to his inspiring influence. This was composed by his chief disciple Kurukēs'a (Tirukkurugaippirān Piḷḷān). A commentary on the *Viṣṇu Sahasranāma* was written by Parāsara Bhaṭṭa in compliance with Rāmānuja's instructions. In this way and by these works the dream of Āḷavandār to formulate *Vis'iṣṭādvattic Vaiṣṇavism* became an accomplished fact. These great works are ever-enduring monuments of Rāmānuja's synthetic genius. To his followers Rāmānuja is the *Uḍaiyavar* or owner of the two worlds and this truth expresses the *S'rī Vaiṣṇava* loyalty to the *Ācārya* and their living faith in him as the *guru* that holds the keys of earth and heaven. To the philosopher, he is the *Bhāṣyakāra* and his *S'rī Bhāṣya* is the exposition *par excellence* of the *Vēdānta Sūtras*.

It is difficult to appraise the worth of this great synoptic thinker, prophet and seer. As the exponent of *Vēdānta* as a philosophy of religion, he reconciles the claims of philosophy with the demands of religion and is between S'aṅkara and Mādhva not only chronologically but also philosophically. With his practical social idealism and essential humanism, he insists on the equality of all *jīvas* owing to the in-dwelling of God in their hearts without in any way undermining the *Gītā*

ideal of *varṇās'rama* and each man's *svadharma*,[1] He was not merely the representative of his age but a philosopher for all time who combined in himself the profundity of a thinker and the humility of a saint. With his magnetic personality, encyclopaedic knowledge and brilliant powers of exposition, he summed up in his long life all that was good in the known past, namely, the heart of Buddha, the head of S'aṅkara and the apostolic fervour of the Semitic religions. Even after ten centuries of his passing away, the dynamic influence of *bhakti* that was created in his life-time is not only not exhausted, but is ever on the increase.

POST-RĀMĀNUJA VIS'IṢṬĀDVAITA

Rāmānuja at the close of his career entrusted the spiritual care of the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* community to seventy-four *Siṃhāsanādhipatis* or apostles. The chief among them were Kurukēsa or S'aṭakōpa, better known as Piḷḷān, who wrote the authoritative gloss called the *Six Thousand* (from the number of *granthas*[2] in it) on the *Tiruvāimoḷi* of Nammāḷvār, Praṇatārtihara, who received the title of *Vēdāntōdayana* (Udayana being the famous master of logic), and Parās'ara Bhaṭṭa, the son of Kūrattāḷvān, born in 1074 A.D. S'aṭakōpa's disciple, Viṣṇucitta, was the *Ācārya* of the famous Varadācārya whose lectures on the *S'rī Bhāṣya* in the hall of S'ri Varadarāja's temple at Kāñci formed the basis of S'udars'ana Bhaṭṭa's standard gloss on the *S'rī Bhāṣya* called the *S'rutaprakās'ikā*.

[1] As instances of his love to humanity are cited the stories of his broadcasting the secret of the *mantra* imparted to him by the *guru* regardless of the torments of hell for transgressing the *guru's* injunction and ol his allowing Ādi Drāviḍas entry into the Melkōt temple on the day of the car festival. It is said Rāmānuja preferred suffering in hell if that would bring salvation to all.

[2] A *grantha* in Sanskrit consists of 32 letters.

Varadācārya was popularly known as Naḍādur Ammāḷ and the hall where he delivered his lectures is still known as Ammāḷ's lecture hall. Parās'ara Bhaṭṭa's disciple, Nañjīyar, wrote a commentary on the *Tiruvāimoḷi* called the *Nine Thousand*. He popularized the study of the *Divya Prabandha* still further, and his disciple Periyavāccān Piḷḷai elaborated his lectures in a work known as the *Twenty-Four Thousand*. It was at this time that the schism in *S'rī Vaisṇavism* became marked and gave rise to the schools of *Tenkalai* and *Vaḍakalai*. After Nampiḷḷai came Vaḍakku Tiruvīdipiḷḷai, who wrote a more elaborate commentary called the *Thirty-Six Thousand* and known as the *Iḍu* or the equal of the *Tiruvāimoḷi*, in its spiritual value. Piḷḷailōkācārya, the son of Vaḍakku Tiruvīdipiḷḷai, was the elder contemporary of Vēdānta Dēs'ika, and is generally regarded as the first formulator of the *Tenkalai* school. He was born in 1264 A.D. He is called the younger Piḷḷai to distinguish him from Nampiḷḷai who lived earlier; and he passed away in 1327 A.D. His spiritual descent is traced to Rāmānuja hierarchically through Periyavāccān Piḷḷai, Nampiḷḷai, Nañjīyar, Bhaṭṭar and Eṃbār. When the Muhammadans sacked S'rīraṅgam, slaughtered the *Vaiṣṇavas* and committed sacrilege in the temple, he took a leading part in removing the *vigraha* to a place of safety. He compossed the eighteen *Rahasyas* or sacred manuals of *Tenkalaism* mostly in *Maṇipravāḷa* or Sanskritized Tamil, of which the chief are the *Artha Pañcaka* and the *Tattva Traya*, dealing with the philosophic aspect, and the *S'rī Vacana Bhūṣaṇa* expounding the religious side. The *Artha Pañcaka* brings out the essentials of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* in their fivefold aspect of (1) the nature of *Īs'vara*, (2) the *jīva*, (3) the *puruṣārtha*, (4) the *upāya* and (5) the *virōdhi*. Each is analysed into five forms with its own special features. *Īs'vara* exists as *para*, *vyūha*,

vibhava, *antaryāmin* and *arcā*, of whom the last as the permanent incarnation of the grace of God is most accessible to the *mumukṣu*. The *jīva* is classified into five kinds, namely, the *nitya* or ever free, the *mukta* or freed, the *baddha* or *saṃsārin*, the *kēvala* enjoying *kaivalya* in a state of stranded spiritual solitude, and the *mumukṣu*. The five chief ends of conduct are *dharma* or the performance of *Vēdic* duties, *artha* or the acquisition of the economic goods of life, *kāma* or the enjoyment of the pleasures of life here and in *Svarga*, *ātmānubhava* or *kaivalya* and *Bhagavadanubhava* or the experience of Brahman. The five means of attaining Brahman are *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti* or salvation by self-effort, *prapatti* or submission to the redemptive will of God and *ācāryābhimāna* or absolute loyalty to the *guru* as a living mediator between the *mumukṣu* and the Lord. The obstacles are also fivefold, and they are traced to faith in other gods, other means and ends than those prescribed for the *mumukṣu*, the mistaken faith in *svarūpa jñāna* as an end in itself, godlessness and the confusions relating to *prapatti*. The *Tattva Traya* is written in a terse aphoristic *maṇipravāḷa* style on the model of the *Brahma Sūtras* and consists of three parts, defining the nature of *cit*, *acit* and *Īs'vara*. Part I defines *ātman* and its *jñāna*, and explains the classification of *ātman*. Part II describes *acit* in its three aspects of *kāla*, *s'uddha sattva* and *mis'ra tattva* or *prakṛti* evolving into the twenty-three categories including the psycho-physical factors of *buddhi*, *manas* and the *indriyas* and the cosmological elements of the five *bhūtas* and *tanmātras*. It is also known as *avidyā* or *māyā*. The third part is devoted to the understanding of *Īs'vara* including His *svarūpa*, *rūpa* and *guṇa*. The *S'rī Vacana Bhūṣana* of the *Ācārya* is also aphoristic. It consists of four chapters,

but is more popular on account of its main religious motive and value. The first chapter brings out the status of *S'rī* in the salvation scheme as the divine mediatrix or *puruṣakāra* between the *cētana* and the Lord, with her unique qualities of *ananyārhatva* (of being His alone), *pāratantrya* or dependence on Him and *kṛpā*, as exemplified in Sītā's life. She joyfully submits herself to *Īs'vara*, as she has her being in Him and belongs to Him, and always intercedes on behalf of the sinner by pleading for his being forgiven. On the one hand, she subdues the retributive will of *Is'vara* by the beauty of her enticing love and on the other, she melts the heart of the sinner by her infinite tenderness. The nature of the Lord as teacher, mediator and saviour in the unitarian way is revealed in the *Bhagavad Gītā* by the Lord Himself being *ācārya*, *puruṣakāra* and *rakṣaka* at the same time. It is the sinner mentality of the sinner that occasions the intervention of divine grace, and this grace is spontaneous and not conditioned by the effort of the self as in the case of the *bhakta*. Of the fivefold forms of divine mercy, *para*, that of Brahman in *Vaikuṇṭha*, is remote like the rain drops in cloud-land ; *vyūha* is like the waters that encircle the cosmic egg ; *antaryāmin*, the indwelling Lord, is like the spring in the earth which has to be discovered ; *vibhava* or that of the *avatārs* is like the occasional freshes in a river which come and go ; and it is only *arcā* that is the reservoir of divinity which remains after the incarnational flow passes away, and it is ever available to the *cētana* who thirsts for God. The Lord is Himself the *upāya* and the *upēya*, and the true meaning of *prapatti* is not winning the grace of God by self-effort but responding passively to its free flow. The second chapter dwells on the superiority of *paragata svīkāra*, in which the Lord seeks the sinner, over the *svagata svīkāra*, in

which the *bhakta* seeks the Lord. Grace is the free gift of God, and it flows spontaneously like mother's milk; if it is to be gained by effort, it resembles the artificial milk for the same baby, purchased in a milk depot or a chemist's shop. The volitional type, which stresses the need for self-effort, often promotes the feelings of self-esteem and self-righteousness, which stain the soul and have no intrinsic value. But justification by faith and self-surrender is the result of operative grace which is as stable as it is spontaneous. When man seeks God, even *prapatti* is futile; but if the Lord elects him, even his sinfulness is ignored, if not relished. *Prapatti* has its fruition in service to God and to the *Bhāgavatas* in a spirit of utter humility without the slightest trace of egoism. A *Bhāgavata* is known by his spiritual worth and not by his birth, and the conceit of birth is an impediment to devotion, and becomes a heresy when a *Bhāgavata* of low birth is not duly respected. The third chapter assigns the highest value to *maṅgaḷās'āsanam* or benediction offered by the devotee, in his intense solicitude of love, to the Lord for His eternal reign of grace and to deep devotion due to tender affection, like that of Periyāḷvār, who was so much drawn by the beauty of Bālakṛṣṇa that, in his God-intoxicated state, he forgot His *īs'varatva* and with deep concern for the safety of the Divine child tended him with the affection of a fond parent. The fourth chapter prefers *ācāryābhimāna* to the grace of God for the main reason that, while the Lord is both just and merciful, the *ācārya* is moved only by mercy. The worship of the *ācārya* became in later days a main feature of some sects of *Vaiṣṇavism* in Northern India also. The work then concludes with the statement that service to the *ācārya* and to the *Bhāgavatas* irrespective of their station in life is the highest and only means of attaining God. Piḷḷailōkācārya was succeeded by

Maṇavāḷa Mahāmunigal, who is revered by the *Tenkalais* as their greatest *Ācārya*. The chief contribution of *Tenkalaism* to the cause of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* consists in its democratic dissemination to all people, of the truths of the *darśana* confined till then to the higher castes.

Three centuries after Rāmānuja, arose another great teacher of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, Vēdānta Dēs'ika, who, by his unrivalled *jñāna* and *vairāgya*, established beyond doubt the teaching of *Ubhaya Vēdānta* and spread the gospel of *prapatti* as a *Vēdāntic* means to the attainment of Brahman. Veṅkaṭanātha, as he was named, was born in 1268 A.D. at Tūppil in Kāñci, which, in his own words,[1] is the chief among the seven salvation-giving cities in this blessed land of Ind whose soil is so congenial to the sprouting of spirituality. The biography of prophets and saints is often a blending of supernatural, historical and mystical elements whose relevancy and value are determined by the reactions of the readers. Vēdānta Dēs'ika is called Ghaṇṭāvatāra as he is said to be the incarnation of the bell of the shrine of S'rī S'rīnivāsa at Tirupati, through whom the Lord rings the glory of His love from the hill top and summons humanity to partake of it. Veṅkaṭanātha's spiritual descent is traced to Rāmānuja through a line of *ācāryas*—Appuḷḷār, Naḍādūr Ammāl, Viṣṇucittar and Tirukkurukaippirānpiḷḷān. His prodigious intellect was a marvel even in his childhood; and one day, when, at the age of five, he followed his uncle Appuḷḷār to the temple of S'rī Varada where the great Naḍādūr Ammāḷ was delivering a brilliant discourse on the *Pāñcarātra*, that great *ācārya* was so much attracted by the beaming countenance of the bright boy that he missed the thread of his lecture, which was then

[1] muttitarum nagar ezhil mukkiyamâm kacci.

supplied by the precocious lad. Under the guidance of his uncle, Ātrēya Rāmānuja familiarly known as Appuḷḷār, he easily acquired, even at the age of twenty,[1] perfect knowledge in all the then available secular and spiritual literature, including the arts, the sciences, the several *darsʹanas*, the various *āgamas*, *Smṛtis*, *Vēdas*, *Vēdānta*, and the *Prabandhas*, a mastery which led later on to the title of "Sarva Tantra Svatantra" or the master of all arts and sciences, being divinely bestowed on him at Sʹrīraṅgam. In addition to his encyclopaedic knowledge, he had intuitive intimations of the divine nature of *Brahmānubhava*. He was married to Kanakavalli who proved to be a worthy companion in his *Vēdāntic* mission, and together they led an exemplary life, he living for God only and she for God in him. When Appuḷḷār's end was near, he blessed Dēsʹika and exhorted him to spread the ideals of *Visʹiṣādvaita* and to carry on the great tradition. Veṅkaṭanātha went to Tiruvahīndrapuram, a holy place in the South Arcot District, and, on the pretty hill overlooking the river Garuḍa, he chose a pipul tree for *yogic* meditation, first on Garuḍa, the embodiment of the *Vēdas*, and then on Hayagrīva, the Lord of Wisdom. He was soon blessed with a vision of Hayagrīva who conferred on him the power to spread the *Visʹiṣṭādvaita* system in the interests of world-welfare. He composed several *stōtras* in Sanskrit like the *Hayagrīva Stōtra*, and the well-known lyric the *Mahāvīra Vaibhava* and also a *Prākṛta* poem *Ac yutasʹatakam*; and his *Gōpāla Viṃsʹati*, a hymn of twenty stanzas on Gōpāla or the cowherd Kṛṣṇa, is written in the sweetest strains of Sanskrit melody. The opponents of the system representing seventeen doctrines and sects were overthrown by him in a controversy started by them, and the

[1] Vimsʹatyābdē visʹruta nānāvidha vīdyaḥ.

arguments advanced during the debate were then summarized by him in a Sanskrit-Tamil polemic work called the *Paramata Bhaṅgam.* With his logical subtlety, metaphysical profoundity, poetic genius, unrivalled debating skill and devotional earnestness, he was able to defeat his rivals and make them his disciples. Owing to his rare mastery of poetics and dialectics and the art of disputation, he won the title of "Kavi Tārkika Siṃha" (the lion of poets and logicians). He then returned to Kāñci, composed many more *stōtras* and *Prabandhas*, including the *Varadarāja Pañcās'at*, in praise of S'rī Varada, his favourite deity, who accepted his *prapatti*, as shown by his works, *Nyāsa Das'aka* and the *Aḍaikkalappattu.*[1]

An important event in one's life in those days was the pilgrimage that one undertook to holy places in Northern India including Benares and Bṛndāvan *via* Tirupati. In his *Dayā S'ataka*, composed at Tirupati, he praises the redemptive grace of S'rīnivāsa as the permanent incarnation of Brahman and as the Lord of creation who is ruled by His *dayā* or grace. In this incarnation of Divinity, redemptive love dominates over omnipotence and transfigures it into almighty mercy. On his return to Kāñci after seven years of pilgrimage, he wrote his famous reply to his old friend, Vidyāraṇya, the minister of Bukkarāya, the king of Vijayanagar, who had invited him to the court to receive royal favour. The reply consists of five stanzas called the *Vairāgya Pañcaka* and is a classical expression of his *vairāgya.* He said that the grains gleaned in the harvest field, a handful of water from a tank and a tattered loin cloth were enough for the body and that, rich with the possession of the heavenly treasure at

[1] Attigiri Arulālarku aḍaikkalam nān pukundēnē.

Hastigiri (Kāñci), he had no need for earthly treasures. The story is told of how he rejected and threw away gold pieces that were one day concealed by well-intentioned benefactors in the doles of rice given to him in his daily rounds of *uñcavṛtti* or alms-taking. When he was fifty years old, he accepted an invitation from the *Vaiṣṇavite* leaders of S'rī-raṅgam to defend the *dars'ana* against the charges made by some eminent *Advaitins* from the north. The opponents were vanquished in a seven days' controversy and converted to the faith. The arguments used in the debate were summarized by his disciples in the well-known work called *S'ata Dūṣaṇī,* and the title "Ubhaya Vēdāntācārya" was then divinely conferred on him. It was in S'rīraṅgam that he wrote his chief philosophical works and *rahasyas.* In 1310, Malik Kaffur, the general of Allauddin, sacked Madura and later on the Mohamemdans invaded S'rīraṅgam and massacred thousands of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavas* in the latter place, including Sudars'ana Bhaṭṭa, the author of *S'ruta Prakās'ika* the standard gloss on the *S'rī Bhāṣya.* Vēdānta Dēs'ika, however, saved the gloss by burying it in the ground and also took charge of Sudars'ana Bhaṭṭa's two sons who were entrusted to him during that reign of terror. He then retired to Satyamaṅgalam (now part of the Coimbatore District) in Mysore, as Rāmānuja had done, and later returned with joy when he heard of the restoration of the shrine of S'rīrangam and the re-installation of the image of the Lord. He then composed the allegorical drama called the *Saṅkalpa Sūryōdaya* in ten acts, which has more divinity in it than the divine comedy of Dante, as a rejoinder to the *Advaitic* work of Kṛṣṇa Mis'ra known as the *Prabodha Candrōdaya.* His *Haṃsa Sandēs'a* is on the lines of Kāḷidāsa's *Mēgha Dūta,* but it improves on the poet's

work, as it employs poetry in the service of religion. The *Pādukā Sahasraṃ* is said to have been composed as a hymn on the sandals of S'rī Raṅganātha in three hours during one night, to justify the title of *Kavi Tārkika Siṃha* which was demurred to by his opponents. He wrote more than forty works in S'rīraṅgam and lived for the full span of one hundred years and one more.

His life has a more inspiring influence than even his learning, and, though uncompromising as a critic and controversialist, he was absolutely austere and humble in his daily life, and bore meekly many a trial and tribulation returning love for hatred. His chief characteristics were his profound appreciation of the 'vision and faculty divine' revealed in Rāmānuja's teaching, his sturdy hatred of dependence on others, his utter contempt for money and position, his deep devotion to God as S'rīman Nārāyaṇa and his anxiety to use his rare logical gifts purely in the service of religion. He had often to conduct disputations but these were always with those who did not accept Rāmānuja's teachings, and he undertook the task in defence of the *dars'ana* and not for personal triumph. This is clear from his own retrospect of his life given in the closing verses of his *Rahasyatraya Sāra*.

nirviṣṭam yatisārvabhaumavacasāmāvṛttibhiryauvanam
nirdhūtētarapāratantryanirayā nītāssukham vāsarāḥ ।
aṅgīkṛtya satām prasattimasatām garvōpi nirvāpitāḥ
s'ēṣāyuṣyapi s'ēṣidampatidayā dīkṣā mudīkṣāmahē ॥

Thus he spent his time in devotional service to God and godly men and in the spread of the gospel of *prapatti* to all. He had twelve disciples to carry on his work. Among them, the chief were his son Varadācārya and the *sannyāsin*

Brahmatantrasvatantra. He passed away in the year 1369 full of age and honours.

His main contribution to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* was the further elucidation of the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* teachings of Rāmānuja by establishing by *Vēdāntic* methods the truths of *Ubhaya Vēdānta* and the supreme value of *prapatti.* With his synthetic genius, he sought the co-ordination of the different facets of his encyclopædic knowledge, by the central idea of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* or Self of all. As an acute logician and metaphysician, he pointed out the essentials of scriptural knowledge in his *Rahasyatraya Sāra* and explained the *Upaniṣads* in terms of the *Divya Prabandha* and the *Divya Prabandha* in terms of the *Upaniṣads.* He thus co-ordinated the teachings of the *ṛṣis* and the *Āḷvārs.* He was a synoptic thinker with a long-range view of life as well as a vision of reality. As a conservative revolutionary, he bridged the gulf between *bhakti* and *prapatti* by reconciling the moral and social needs of *karma* and the religious needs of *kṛpā.* He harmonized the paternal idea of the Fatherhood of God and rulership with the maternal instinct of tenderness, in the idea of Nārāyaṇa and S'rī. Truth is true for ever and uncompromising, but when it is transfigured by love, it mediates between extremes, links thought and action and becomes a unifying power. Truth is based on non-contradiction and is expressed by 'either—or—'; but love is based on harmony, and is expressed by 'both—and—'. Vēdānta Dēs'ika was a metaphysician as well as a *bhakta,* and though he spoke and wrote as a rigorous logician, he acted as a true *bhakta* in whom *dayā* was more dominant than dialectic display. His daily life was a model of saintly purity and simplicity.

In the light of this critical estimate of his work and worth, his philosophic exposition may be briefly summarized under the headings of epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics and religion. The merit of his logic and epistemology consists in reconstructing the *Nyāya Vais'ēṣika* system in the light of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* by simplifying the categories and including among the *pramāṇas* the teachings of the *Āḷvārs* by extolling them with the name *Dramiḍōpaniṣad.* The *Nyāya Paris'uddhi* expounds the nature of the three main *pramāṇas* and proves the authority of the *Pāncarātra.* His *Sēs'vara Mīmāmsa* is a reconstruction of Jaimini's *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* by integrating the two *Mīmāmsas* and controverting the atheistic interpretation of the former. His metaphysics has a negative and a positive side. On the negative side, it is a refutation of rival systems. In his Tamil work, *Paramata Bhaṅga,* he gives a brief summary of the doctrines of the prevailing philosophical systems, somewhat on the lines of the *Sarva Dars'ana Saṅgraha* of Madhvācārya, and refutes them in the light of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita.* But it is his *S'ata Dūṣaṇi* that brings out his dialectical genius in repudiating *Māyāvāda* on the lines of Rāmānuja's criticism known as the *saptavidhānupapatti* and also in criticizing the two schools of *Bhēdābhēda.* The *Vādi Traya Khaṇḍana* is a shorter work following the same lines of criticism. The constructive side of his contribution is brought out in the following philosophical works. *Tattva Muktā Kalāpa* is a *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* exposition of the nature of *jaḍa* or *acit, jīva* or *cit, mukti, adravya, buddhi* and *Īs'vara. Sarvārtha Siddhi* is a more detailed exposition of the same truths. *Nyāya Siddhāñjana* consists of six sections dealing with the same problems of *jaḍa, jīva, Īs'vara, mukti, buddhi* and *adravya.* His commentaries on *Īs'āvāsyōpaniṣad* and *Bhagavad Gīṭā* controvert the *Advaitic* theory of *ajñāna*

and *akarma* and defend the view that Brahman is *saguṇa* and not *nirguṇa* and that *karma* is transfigured into *kaiṅkarya*. Dēs'ika's *Vēdāntic* ethics insists on the performance of the imperatives of duty as divine commands according to each man's station in life, which is determined by his *karma* and *guṇa*. In his *Vairāgya Pañcaka*, Vēdānta Dēs'ika shows that man cannot worship God and mammon at the same time and that the divine treasure is infinitely more valuable than the pleasures that earthly wealth can provide. His poetic genius lay in his synthesis of literature and religion by furnishing a divine background to epic, lyric and dramatic poetry. This is recognized by the great philosopher, Appayya Dīkṣitar, who commented on Dēs'ika's work, *Yādavābhyudaya*, in the course of which he pays a glowing tribute to the poetic genius of Dēs'ika. His aesthetic philosophy defines Brahman as the beautiful and blissful, and prefers *bhakti* to the *rasas* extolled by mere aesthetics. In his *Saṅkalpa Sūryōdaya*, the author combats the *Advaitic* conclusion of Kṛṣṇa Mis'ra, by preferring the solar light of divine grace to the moony effulgence of *ātmajñāna*. It is an allegorical drama in ten Acts representing the conflict in the *jīva* between the forces of *Vivēka* and *Mahāmōha* helped by *Kāma*, *Krōdha*, *Darpa* and *Ḍaṃbha*. *Vivēka* subdues the evils of *rāga* and *dvēṣa* and is reinforced by *vairāgya* and *tattva jñāna* led by *Viṣṇubhakti*. The hero is Vivēka and Sumati is his queen and their plan is to free the Puruṣa from the hazards of *karma* and to enable him to attain *mukti*. Act I begins the play by showing the seductive charms of Kāma and his plan of enticing Puruṣa, which is to be frustrated by Vivēka. Act II presents the teachings of Rāmānuja by the refutation of rival systems and the steadying effect of this on Vivēka. Acts III and 1V delineate the evil

influence of *rāga* and *dvēṣa* on Puruṣa. Act V describes the power philosophy of pride and vanity and reveals the author's accurate knowledge of human psychology. Acts VI and VII describe the aerial travel of Vivēka to all the important religious centres of India with a view to discovering a congenial place for meditation on the Lord and concludes that the purified heart is the best place for focussing the will on the beauteous form of the Lord and for conquering the foes of the spirit. Act VIII describes the battle between Vivēka and Mahāmōha and the final victory of Vivēka. In the last two Acts, Puruṣa, freed from the evils of *mōha*, enters on the practice of introversion or *samādhi*, and, aided by Viṣṇu-bhakti, he surrenders himself to the Lord and attains *s'ānti*, on the solar awakening of divine *saṅkalpa* or grace. With the dawn of His redemptive will, the darkness of *mōha* is dispelled for ever.

Vēdānta Dēs'ika expounds the essentials of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* in a popular way in his masterpiece called the *Rahasya-traya Sāra*, in which he follows the *Sūtra* method of developing the whole theme in terms of *tattva*, *hita* and *puruṣārtha*. The supreme *tattva* is S'rīman Nārāyaṇa as the *s'arīrin* or the Self of the *jīva*, being its *ādhāra* or support, *niyantā* or controller, *s'ēṣī* or possessor and *svāmī* or master. He is Himself the *upāya* and the *upēya*. The *sādhya upāya* or means of attainment is *bhakti* or its alternative *prapatti*. The *siddhōpāya* is the free causality of God Himself. He thus emphasizes that, though the prime cause of salvation is the grace of God who is the *siddha upāya*, the aspirant has to deserve it at least by seeking it or asking for it. The mother's milk flows freely no doubt, but it does not do so unless the child applies its mouth to the teat. This *sādhya upāya*

determines the nature of the recipients of the grace of the Lord, who is not an arbitrary or capricious ruler. The treatise also describes the life of the *prapanna* and his integral experience of Brahman in *Vaikuṇṭha* in the state of *sāyujya*. This is also beautifully brought out in his *Paramapada Sōpāna*, in which he constructs a spiritual ladder, as it were, from worldliness to *Vaikuṇṭha*. In this pathway to the headquarters of Reality, the main mile-stones are the metaphysical knowledge of Brahman arrived at by *vivēka*, the moral progress of the pilgrim through *vairāgya*, the religious striving by *bhakti* or *prapatti* and the mystic ascent to the home in the Absolute.

After Piḷḷailōkācārya and Vēdānta Dēs'ika, the split between the *Tenkalai* and *Vaḍakalai* schools became more pronounced. While the latter tradition was carried on by Varadācārya, Brahmatantrasvatantra and their disciples, the *Tenkalai* position was definitely consolidated and established by Maṇavāḷa Mahāmunigal (1370—1443 A.D.). This well-known leader of the *Tenkalai* school was born near Āḷvār Tirunagari in *Tinnevelly*. He was the son of Tōtādri, a devotee of Lord Raṅganātha, and is believed by his followers to have been a re-incarnation of Rāmānuja. He soon acquired proficiency in the tenets of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and was initiated into the essentials of the *Tiruvāimoḷi* by a famous teacher S'rī S'aila or Tiruvāimoḷipiḷḷai by name. He settled down at S'rīraṅgam and spent his time in consecrated service to the Lord and the co-ordination of worship in the *Vaiṣṇava* shrines by organizing the work of his disciples in different sees or centres of *sampradāya* or tradition. His devotion to Rāmānuja is well brought out in his work known as the *Yatirāja Vims'ati*, and he is therefore called

"Yatīndra Pravaṇa." He entered the *sannyāsa* order and spent his days in devotion to S'rī Raṅganātha and the exposition of the *Prabandha*. To popularize the teachings of Piḷḷai-lōkācārya, he wrote commentaries in a lucid style on *Tattva Traya*, *S'rī Vacana Bhūṣaṇa* and *Ācārya Hṛdaya* and also on *Tiruvāimoḷi*. He also composed a work called *Upadēs'a Ratnamālā* which contains the main teachings of the *Āḷvārs*. The chief disciples of the *Ācārya* were called the "Aṣṭa Diggajas" or the eight elephants guarding the eight quarters of the land and spreading the gospel of grace to all persons. One of them is stated to be Prativādi Bhayaṅkara, who wrote the *Saptati Ratnamālika* in praise of Vēdānta Dēs'ika. The split between the *Vaḍakalai* and the *Tenkalai* schools widened in course of time and the *pātrams* or laudatory verses recited in temple-worship to-day in praise of the leading *ācāryas* are a signal for sectarian strife though there is no intrinsic cause for dissension.

There are eighteen points of difference[1] between the schools, which are mostly doctrinal, and they may be grouped under the principles relating to *tattva*, *hita* and *puruṣārtha*. Among the epistemological ways of knowing Brahman, Vēdānta Dēs'ika insists on the integrity of *Ubhaya Vēdānta* and the equal validity and value of the religious authority of the *ṛṣis* and the *Āḷvārs*; but the *Tenkalai* school stresses the value of the Tamil *Prabandha* on account of its pure *sātvika* and *Vaiṣṇava* character. The *Vēdāntic* view of the entry of the

[1] They are summarized in the following verse :—

bhēdās svāmikṛpāphalānyagatiṣu srivyāptyupāyatvayōḥ
tadvātsalyadayāniruktivacasām nyāsē ca tatkartari I
dharmatyāgavirōdhayōs svavihitē nyāsāṅgahētutvayōḥ
prāyas'cittavidhau tadiyabhajanē nuvyāpti kaivalyayōḥ II

infinite into the finite is interpreted by the former school as co-existence and by the latter as pervasion. But the main point of controversy relates to the nature of Lakṣmī. The *Vaḍakalai* school, recognizing the equal religious value of justice and mercy, regards S'rī as infinite or *vibhū* and defines the divine nature as non-dual ontologically and dual functionally. *Īs'vara* and *Īs'varī* are two in one and one in two like the flower and its fragrance, and no mathematical explanation is adequate or relevant in dealing with their transcendental unity. Lakṣmī is *akāra* (अ) or *Īs'vara* and not *makāra* (म) or *jīva*, and her redemptive mercy is omnipotent; the *mithuna* or unity of the Lord and S'rī is vital to the *mumukṣu*. The *Tenkalai* is more monotheistic when he denies the dual nature of the infinite and relegates Lakṣmī to the level of a *jīva*. Whatever the ontological status of Lakṣmī, there is no doubt that both the schools insist on Her *kṛpā* as essential to *mukti*. As divine mediatrix, she intervenes between the sinner and the Holy and transforms the former into a *mukta* and the latter into the Saviour. As regards the nature of the *hita*, or *summum bonum*, the *Vaḍakalai* recognizes the superiority of *bhakti* and *prapatti* to *karma* and *jñāna* and insists on the equal validity of *bhakti* and *prapatti* as means to *mukti*. But he prefers the latter on account of its ease, immediacy, naturalness and universality. *Prapatti* is the act of casting oneself on the mercy of God with the guidance of the *guru* and craving for mercy, and is not born of conceit. With a view to reconciling the opposition between *karma* and *kṛpā* and to avoiding the charge of attributing cruelty and caprice to *Īs'vara*, the *Vaḍakalai* insists on the need for deserving the grace of God before desiring it and formulates the theory of *vyāja* and *ākiñcanya* or consciousness of unworthiness as an occasion for redemption and restoration. The human will is there, we

know not how; but it is made to subserve God's will as it belongs to Him and has *parādhīna kartṛtva* and not *svatantra kartṛtva*. But the *Tenkalai* rejects this view as savouring of egoism and emphasizes the absoluteness and unconditioned nature of God's grace (*nirhētuka kaṭākṣa*). To him responsiveness to the grace of God has more appeal than the idea of human initiative and responsibility. "Whom He chooses, unto him He reveals Himself," and *bhakti* is itself only the consequence of antecedent grace. *Karma*, *jñāna*, and *bhakti* have independent values determined by the nature of the aspirant or *adhikārī*. While the *Vaḍakalai* defines the effect of *vāṭsalya* in the divine nature as the removal of *dōṣa* and cleansing the soul of its soilure, the *Tenkalai* thinks that *vāṭsalya* connotes delight in *dōṣa*. It is the nature of forgiveness to welcome the sinner and not to penalize him for his wrong-doing. To the *Vaḍakalai*, *dayā* is realized only in the removal of another's suffering; but to the *Tenkalai* it is *para duḥkē duḥkitvam* entering into the sorrows of man and even the relish of evil as physical evil. On the social side, the *Vadakalai* insists on the performance of *svadharma* or the duties relating to one's station in life even in the stage after *prapatti*, as *kaiṅkarya* and in conformity to the divine command; but the *Tenkalai* feels that the acts of the *prapanna* are amoral and should not be judged by the moral standards applicable to the ordinary men following the rules of *varṇās'rama*, and the question of moral laxity, condemnation or condonation does not arise in his case. This problem closely resembles that relating to the conduct of the *jīvanmukta* as amoral in the sense of fulfilling the moral law or amoral as a law unto itself. While there is a view amongst some *Tenkalais* that makes Nammāḷvār a *nitya saṃsārin* with a view to extolling the absolute *kṛpā* and the need

for atonement and acceptance, the *Vaḍakalai* traces the castes of the *Āḷvārs* to the incarnational requirements of the *Rakṣaka* and not to their *karma*. The controversy on *puruṣārtha* hinges on the status of the *kaivalyārthī*. While the *Vaḍakalai* contends that he is on the path to perfection or *Paramapada*, the *Tenkalai* assigns to him a place in *Paramapada* itself, but segregates him from the society of the *nitya sūris*.

From the philosophical standpoint, as contrasted with the doctrinal teachings of dogmatics, these distinctions are, on the whole, negligible. In Hinduism which is a view as also a way of life, philosophical differences enter into and affect the minutest details of life and sometimes make for sectarian disputes and accentuate social exclusiveness. This influence is felt even in the *siddhānta* or theology of *Advaita*, though its theory of the Absolute admits of degrees of truth, goodness and beauty and is all-accommodating and tolerant. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, as a philosophy of mystic love, is deeply interested in synthesis and harmony without destroying individuality and works for universal salvation. But, as *Vaiṣṇavite* theology and ritual, it is constrained, in the interests of logical truth and ethical discrimination, to follow the method of 'either—or—' and develop its own dogmas and ceremonials and build up *Vaiṣṇavite* institutions somewhat on the lines of the Christian church and the group feeling of Islam. Every system has its own *saṃpradāya* or tradition which tends to divide its followers into warring sects, when the logical intellect aided by the passion for external observances takes the place of spiritual spontaneity and when law supersedes love. Institutional religion often grows by alliance with secular power, compromises with it, and is finally enslaved by it. These influences

can be traced also in the history of modern *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism*. Its tendency to profitless logomachy and degrading litigancy are blots on the fair name of the whole *dars'ana*. The historian philosopher who takes a long-range view of *Vaiṣṇavism* and discerns its inner meaning and value knows from history that while the increase of sects is inevitable, sectarianism is undesirable.

Philosophically interpreted, the differences between the schools are not fundamental, but refer to matters of opinion.[1] In finding out the heart of *Vaiṣṇavism*, the works of the *Tenkalai* school which are mostly in Tamil are complementary to those of the *Vaḍakalais* and Vēdānta Dēs'ika is claimed by both the schools in their *Vēdāntic* aspect as the defender of *Vaiṣṇavism* regarded as *Vīs'iṣṭādvaita dars'ana*. The eighteen points of difference can be reduced to the single problem of *kṛpā* versus *karma* in its aspect of the practice of *upāya*, just as the doctrinal differences in post-S'aṅkara *Advaita* may be traced to the critical study of the relation between *jñāna* and *avidyā*. The problem resembles the Christian question, whether salvation is justification by works or by faith. It is sometimes stated, in the language of William James, as the rivalry between the volitional type of saintliness and the self-surrender type, but the points of difference in the analogy are more essential than those of agreement. The idea of original sin and vicarious atonement in a miraculous way by the only begotten Son of God is foreign to the ethical religion of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism*. The theory of grace as a supernatural infusion without a spiritual transformation and regeneration creates an unbridgeable gulf between the natural and the supernatural,

[1] *cf*. Vēdānta Dēs'ika in his *Saṃpradāya Paris'uddhi*.
S'ri Bhāṣyakārarudaiya s'iṣyasampradāyaṅgalil onrilum arthavirōdham illai. vākyayōjanābhēdamē ulladu.

between the moral and the religious consciousness. If salvation is by antecedent merit, and justification by works, it is said to be moralistic and ritualistic and to involve more faith in the inexorability of the moral law of *karma* than in the escapability arising from divine grace. If salvation is by faith and antecedent grace and guarantees the remission of sin without any condition like remorse, it is said to favour the faith in election and pre-determination and the idea of divine arbitariness which might lead to the toleration of moral laxity and chaos. Vēdānta Dēs'ika's view of *vyājya* is rooted in the assurance of ethical religion, that *Bhagavān* is Himself the *upāya* and the *upēya*, and the true meaning of human responsibility consists in our responsiveness to the call of *kṛpā*. It is the first principle of redemptive religion that, while the holiness of God drives us away from Him, His mercy enters into culpable humanity and draws us to Him. Even the appearance of a contrite heart and the feeling of unworthiness shown in an infinitesimal degree evokes sympathy and elicits the infinite grace of the *Rakṣaka*. This view is the meeting of the extremes of salvation by merit and salvation by mercy, and the infinity of *dayā* works through the infinitesimal condition of contrition. It is the recognition of the fact that endeavour consists in recognizing the futility of endeavour. This view preserves the idea of divine justice and provides for the domination of divine grace which is its fruition, and if there is any difference between the two schools, it is in the starting point and not in the goal. It is in the emphasis of aspects and not in the choice of opposing theories. The relation between righteousness and redemption in the working of God in human history is a holy mystery which is more worthy of reverential study than the mere philosophy of the mystery of the relation between Brahman and *avidyā* in *Advaita*. If the rope-snake

riddle typifies the riddle of the universe, the *karma-kṛpā* problem is the mystery of religious experience, which is more relevant to the *mumukṣu* than the logical puzzle and cannot be lightly dismissed as a theological dogma meant for the ignorant. The vexed question cannot be solved logically or ethically. It can be dissolved only by the direct intuition of God. The point whether *kaṭākṣa* is *sahētuka* or *nirhētuka* arising from merit or arising even when there is no merit (*gratia co-operans* or *gratia operans*) is raised in terms of the causal category, which is not so adequate as the organic or mystic conception of the *s'arīra-sarīrin* relation. When *bhakti* or *prapatti* is intense and irrepressible, the soul hungers for God, its *s'arīrin*, and God also hungers for the soul as its *ātman* and this reciprocity of love ends in the irresistibility of the bliss of communion. In this rapport, the logical intellect is merged in alogical ecstasy and is indistinguishable from it. If this is the experience of the *Āḷvārs* as expounded by the *ācāryas*, the distinction between the two schools regarding the working of *kṛpā* is a distinction without much difference.

CHAPTER XXI

THE INFLUENCE OF RĀMĀNUJA ON OTHER SYSTEMS IN INDIA

THE catholicity of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion lies in its synthetic insight into truth and the spiritual transformation of such insight into all-pervasive or universal love. It is borne out by the following oft-quoted authoritative statements contained in the *Vēda* and the *Gītā* and the utterances of Nammāḷvār and Rāmānuja. Says the *Ṛg Vēda* : " *Sat* is one though the seers describe it in different ways." [1] Thus the *Gītā* : " Even those who worship other divinities, in love and faith, worship myself, Kauntēya, but they do so in an informal manner." [2] " Like the rain-fed rivers that flow into the ocean, the worship offered to all *Dēvas* or deities finally reaches Kēs'ava." [3] Nammāḷvār says : " The hymns uttered in praise of your chosen gods are really addressed to my *Tirumāl* or *Paramātma*."[4] Rāmānuja's synthetic method consists in his conclusion that all ideas and names ultimately connote Brahman or Nārāyaṇa, that the worship of deities like Indra is really the worship of Nārāyaṇa, the Inner Ruler of all

[1] ēkam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti.
[2] yē tvanya dēvatā bhaktāḥ yajantē s'raddhayānvitaḥ l
tēpi māmēva kauntēya yajantyavidhipūrvakam ll—*B.G.*, IX. 23.
[3] ākās'āt patitam tōyam yathā gaccati sāgaram l
sarvadēvanamaskāraḥ kēs'avam prati gaccati ll
[4] num in kavi koṇḍu num num rṭṭā deivam eṭṭināl
çemmin cudarmuḍi en tirumālukkuccērumē.—*Tiru.*, III. ix. 6.

beings, and that in the light of this truth the essential points in the *Sāṅkhya*, the *Vēda* and the *Pās'upata* doctrines are to be adopted.[1] The terms *sarva s'arīrin*, *sarva s'abdavācya* and *sarva rakṣaka* refer only to Brahman or Nārāyana. In the centuries that have followed the age of Rāmānuja, Hinduism has been threatened with extinction by the attacks of proselytizing religions like Islam and Christianity and it has on the whole successfully resisted these attacks by its innate synthetic genius. In critical times in the Afghan, the Mughal and the British periods, prophets and saints arose in different parts of the country to meet the onslaughts of these hostile religions and the history of *Vaiṣṇavism*, especially in Northern India, marks the different stages of its development based on the needs of the situation ; but in many cases the new movements had their ultimate origin in the teachings of Rāmānuja as interpreted liberally rather than literally. Reformers like Rāmānanda, Caitanya, and Rāmdās came to fulfil the past and not to destroy it and even revolutionary movements like those that arose in Bengal and the Punjab have felt the assimilative power of ancient Hinduism. More than all, even alien faiths that came to conquer institutionally have been conquered in a mystic way by the silent power of love as exemplified in the lives of Indian Sufis and Christian mystics. The vitality of the *Vaiṣṇavite* and the *Vaiṣṇavizing* movements is largely traceable to the influence of Rāmānuja who himself represents the ancient tradition of *Vēdāntic* hospitality and love. Though this chapter is not strictly a part of the whole work, its main object is to bring out the vitality of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* as a living religion and its claim to be a world religion based on universality as opposed to uniformity. It is essentially a religion of *sātvic* love based on *s'āstraic* authority and spiritual

[1] *S'rī Bhāṣya*, II. ii. 43,

experience and, if the other religions satisfy the test of spirituality, they are, pragmatically speaking, allied to it.

The *bhakti* movement in Northern India is traceable to the influence of Rāmānanda. By its stress on monotheistic faith in one God and the establishment of spiritual brotherhood, it accepted the challenge of Islam in the Muhammadan period, made Hindustan safe for Hinduism, and saved it from disintegration and destruction. The montheism of Rāmānanda exerted a great influence also on the offshoots of Hinduism like Sikhism and Brahmoism and even on Sufism, and marked the focussing point of the varieties of *Vaiṣṇavite* experience in Northern India. Rāmānanda (1300—1411) was deeply influenced by the teaching of Rāmānuja and was initiated into the truths of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* ; but he was a radical reformer and did not recognize caste distinctions in religion. He vitalized religion by freeing it from religiosity, and spread the universal gospel of *bhakti*. He is thus regarded as the fountainhead of the *bhakti* movement in Northern India. Brahman is, according to him, the One without a second, and is immanent in the hearts of all sentient beings. Rāma is Brahman, and there is no other God but Rāma. Rāma was the incarnation of *dharma* or was righteousness itself, and is adored as the pattern of perfection in politics, conjugal life and religion, in their highest aspects of monarchy, monogamy and monotheism. Monarchy is government by a wise ruler who has the righteousness of God ; monogamy insists on absolute conjugal fidelity in thought, word and deed ; and monotheism is faith in the universal Redeemer ; and history does not afford a better example of a just ruler, loyal husband and merciful Lord than Rāma. The ethical religion of Rāma has therefore a universal appeal.

Religion is the spiritual realization of God by every person, irrespective of social distinctions. The twelve disciples of Rāmānanda, who, like the twelve apostles of Jesus, ardently spread the faith by their life and teachings in the mother-tongue, came from all classes of society, especially from the depressed classes, and Kabīr and Tulsidās were among the chief of them. Ravidās, a cobbler by birth, is said to have initiated Mīrā Bāi into the meaning of *bhakti*, and insisted on the need for democratizing *bhakti* by service to all. S'ēna, a barber, made the Rāja of Bandōgārh a disciple of *Vaiṣṇavism*. Dāna (1415) was a Jat and Pīpa (1425) was a Rājput prince. S'ukānanda, Asānanda, Paramānanda, Mēhānanda and S'rī Ānanda also belonged to the order of Rāmānuja. Kabīr, born in 1398, is regarded as the greatest of Rāmānanda's disciples. He is said to be the son of a Brahmin widow brought up by a Muhammadan weaver. The story is told that Kabīr resorted to a device to deserve the grace of Rāmānanda, by laying himself on the Ganges Ghat in the *guru's* path in the darkness of an early morning. When Rāmānanda touched the head of Kabīr, he cried " Rāma, Rāma," and Kabīr felt that it was the *mantra* given to him by the *guru* for meditation. He insisted on monotheistic devotion touched with morality, cared more for inner purity than for caste rigour and idolatry, and did his best to unite Islam and Hinduism by synthesizing their *Vēdāntic* and Sūfi aspects. Dāḍu (1544—1603), a cotton cleaner at Ahmedabad, believed more in God-realization than in blind faith in scripture. He had interviews with Akbar with a view to bringing together divergent faiths in a common bond of love. Sūri Dās, blind from his birth, dedicated his poetic talents to the service of S'rī Kṛṣṇa. Tulsidās (1532) was a Brahmin who had a genius for Rāma *bhakti*, and composed his immortal Hindi

Rāmāyaṇa which is so highly valued in Hindustan for its moving power. But he was more conservative than Kabīr and Dāḍu.

The philosophy of Niṃbārka[1] called *Dvaita-Advaita* or the Sanatkumāra *saṃpradāya* seems to stand midway between the school of Yādava and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and is a system of *Vaiṣṇavism*. Niṃbārka's commentary on the *Vēdānta Sūtras* is known as the *Vēdānta Pārijāta Saurabha*. Reality is, according to Niṃbārka, an identity that pervades difference and gives meaning to it. Bare identity is as unthinkable as bare difference. Negation denies only bare difference, but not otherness. *Dvaita-Advaita* may appear paradoxical, but is not self-contradictory, and it does equal justice to both the aspects of *Dvaita* and *Advaita*. Brahman exists in itself in its *abhēda* aspect as the *saguṇa* or the self-determined and enters into the world in a *bhēdābhēda* relation in terms of distinction as well as dependence. The cosmic order is the self-actualization of the creative potency or *s'akti* that is in Brahman. The creative urge or *pariṇāma s'akti* that is at the heart of Reality is potential in *praḷaya* and actualized in *sṛṣṭi*. Reality is the unity in trinity consisting of the *jīva* or *bhōktā*, the subject of experience, the *bhōgya* or object of experience, and *Īs'vara*, the inner Ruler of both. Creation and dissolution resemble the closing and the disclosing of a part of the body of a serpent. Like the spider spinning its cobweb out of itself, Brahman emanates into the universe of space and time, but exceeds their content. The *jīva* is an *aṃs'a* or element of the absolute like the sea and its waves, or the radiant sun and its radiance, and not a fictitious phantom like the reflection

[1] A Telugu Brahmin who lived in the twelfth century A.D. after Rāmānuja and before S'rīkaṇṭha.

of the sun in water. It is different from Brahman and is also identical with it. Brahman exists in and as the *jīva*, but is not tainted by its imperfections. The absolute exists in and as the particular. Owing to the sense of finitude, the *jīva* suffers from the hazards of the divided consciousness and the ills of metempsychosis. The *mumukṣu* as an *upāsaka* contemplates on Brahman as the All-Self and surrenders himself to His grace. The freed self or *prapanna* emerges from the body when it is dissolved at death, soars to the world of Brahman through the shining paths of the gods, and attains the bliss of Brahman. *Mukti* is not *svarūpa aikya* or identity with Brahman or *ēkībhāva* or unity-consciousness, but is the realization of the *Dvaita-Advaita* relation between the *jīva* and Brahman. The chief value of Niṃbārka *Vēdānta* consists in its being a logical transition from the Yādava school to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. It is the latter system alone that removes the fatal defects of *Brahma Pariṇāmavāda* by predicating imperfections to the *jīva* and mutability to *acit*.

The philosophy of Rāmānuja is a logical transition from *Dvaita-Advaita* to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* ; the teaching of Pūrṇaprajña or Madhvācārya marks an important epoch in the history of *Vaiṣṇavism*, and is a change from *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* to *Dvaita dars'ana*. Madhvācārya, the first systematic exponent of the *Dvaita* school of *Vedānta*, was born near Uḍipi in 1199 A.D. Even as a boy, he, like the other great *ācāryas*, showed his extraordinary ability in mastering the various branches of knowledge and metaphysical understanding. Initiated into the *sannyāsa* order early in life, under the name of Ānanda Tīrtha, he felt it his mission in life to give a new and correct interpretation of the *Vēdānta Sūtras*, different from that of other schools, traversed the whole country converting many

thinkers to his view and popularizing his philosophy, finally went to Badrināth and there passed away. He wrote commentaries on the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Gītā* and the *Brahma Sūtras* in the light of the *Dvaita* system, expounded the essentials of the *Mahā Bhārata* and the *Bhāgavata*, and rigorously maintained the view that the *prasthānas* are a single integral whole. With a view to bringing out fully the fundamentals of *Dvaita Vēdānta* by a refutation of other schools, notably of *Māyāvāda*, he composed independent treatises called the *Das'a Prakaraṇas*. His work was carried on by his followers, the chief among them being Jaya Tīrtha, a contemporary of Vidyāraṇya and Vēdānta Dēs'ika, and later on by Vyāsarāya. The philosophy of *Dvaita* has a negative as well as a positive side, and is both speculative and spiritual. On the negative side, it joins issue with *Advaita* and rejects its theories of *nirguṇa* Brahman, *Māyāvāda* and the identity philosophy, and regards the *Advaitins* as Buddhists in disguise. It also rejects Rāmānuja's theory of *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa*, and denies the view that Brahman is the *upādānakāraṇa* of the universe, on the ground that, if He becomes the universe, He ceases to be free and perfect. On the positive side, it insists on the truth that reality is rooted in difference, and establishes the *Vēdāntic* philosophy of theism. Its theory of epistemology is a development of the realistic position that knowledge is *savis'ēṣaṇa* or determinate and not *nirvis'ēṣaṇa* or indeterminate, and is an external relation between the *viṣayī* and the *viṣaya* or the subject and the object. It thus avoids the defects of mentalism, materialism and relativism. Truth is based on correspondence and not on non-contradiction, and therefore there are no degrees of truth and error. The three sources of valid knowledge are *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna* and *āgama* and the three other *pramāṇas* recognized

by *Advaita*, namely, *upamāna*, *arthāpatti* and *anupalabdhi* are included in these and are therefore not independent. *Pratyakṣa* is the basis of knowledge, and is not sublatable or of secondary value; and as knowledge is always *savis'ēṣana*, the distinction between what is *savikalpaka* and *nirvikalpaka* as recognized by S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja does not hold good. When knowledge presents the object as it is and all its instruments function normally, it is true or *yathārtha*, but abnormal cases arising from psycho-physical disorders and *karma*, are sources of error. In all cases, the reality of the world order is presupposed and is never disputed. The *Vēda* is impersonal, infallible and eternal, and has to be accepted by the *āstika* or rejected *in toto* as is done by the *nāstika*; but the theory of relative truth as expounded by *Advaita* leads to no truth at all and thus ends in scepticism.

Epistemology, as the enquiry into the *pramāṇas*, is essential to the ontological exposition of *tattva* or *pramēya* as revealed by the *pramāṇa*. The theory of *vis'ēṣa* is the basic truth of *Dvaitavāda* and it refers to the uniqueness or peculiar particularity of all beings and their attributes. There is five-fold difference or *pañcabhēda*, namely, the difference between Brahman and the *jīva*, Brahman and *jaḍa*, *jīva* and *jīva*, *jīva* and *jaḍa* and *jaḍa* and *jaḍa*. Brahman exists by Himself and is independent, and is the ground of the world of *cētana* and *acētana*. Brahman is *svatantra* or self-dependent, and is pure and perfect, and is the One without a second, having no equal or superior entity. *Cit* and *acit* are dependent on Brahman for their form and function. *Dvaita* cosmology combats *vivartavāda* and *pariṇāmavāda*, and traces the world process to efficient causality and the supreme will of *Īs'vara*. *Īs'vara* is not an illusionist or the immanent cause of creation that

enters into all beings and becomes one with the changing world, but is transcendentally pure and perfect. By His omnipotence, He creates all beings and rules them as their Supreme Lord. The creator is neither enveloped by *māyā* or *avidyā* nor does he suffer from any *pariṇāmic* changes. There is therefore no *vivarta* or *vikāra* in the pure creational motive.

Madhva psychology posits an infinity of eternal *jīvas* which are *vis'ēṣas* and not *vis'ēṣaṇas*, each having its own existence due to its *yōgyatā* or disposition. On the basis of their *yōgyatā*, they are classified into *muktiyōgya*, *tamōyōgya* and *mis'ra jīva*. The first are the *sātvic jīvas* that are eternally free. The second type is *tāmasic* or evil-minded, and they choose the way of sin and eternal damnation. The third type is intermediate, and though they do evil, they can choose the *sātvika* path and attain *mukti*. *Dvaita* philosophy of nature is realistic and pluralistic, and refers to eternal entities which are both positive and negative. The first consists of *prakṛti*, *ākās'a* and *kāla*, and the second, of categories like *abhāva*. They form the cosmic order and are eternally different from *Īs'vara* and *cit*. *Dvaita* ethics insists on the distinction between good and evil, and defines their essential character. The cosmic order is also a moral order sustained by the *guṇas* and *karmas* and ordained by *Īs'vara* who dispenses justice according to desert. The *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* and the *Gītā* recognize the reality of moral distinction and the difference between the *daivic* and *āsuric* types and the consequences of their conduct and character.

The means of attaining *mukti* includes physical, moral and spiritual disciplines based on the *Upaniṣadic* injunctions of *s'ravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. The disciplines are

fully elaborated in the scheme of *Aṣṭāṅga Yōga*, comprising bodily purity, moral excellence and spiritual introspection. They have their consummation in *bhakti* which has its completion in divine grace. *Dvaita* philosophy has its fruition in the religious realization of God and the attainment of *Viṣṇulōka*. Though *mukti* is freedom from the ills of *saṃsāra*, there are differences in the enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman, determined by the peculiarity of each *jīva*. The idea that *mukti* connotes the identity of the *jīva* and Brahman or similarity between the two is opposed to the eternal difference between the creator and the creature, and the *Upaniṣad* teaches this truth when it says "Thou art not That," though the absolutists misconstrue the text as "Thou art That." Some modern exponents of *Dvaita* think that *Dvaita* is *Brahmādvaita* and claim to bring out the monistic truth that Brahman alone is perfect and independent, *advitīya*, and is therefore not dualistic. Monotheism in itself is a form of monism, and on the Hegelian view of progress, it may be regarded as the culmination of Indian philosophic thought. But, since the whole system is based on the principle of absolute difference amongst the *tattvas*, it is safer to follow the ancient tradition and recognize it as a system having its own individuality. Its influence on Northern *Vaiṣṇavism*, especially on the teaching of Caitanya and of Mahārāṣṭra and Kannaḍa saints is deep and permanent. Though *Dvaita* insists on ultimate difference and denies immanent causality, it is not radically different from *Vis'is'ṭādvaitic Vaiṣṇavism*, as it affirms the supremacy of Viṣṇu and the necessity of *bhakti*.

Vallabha, the founder *S'uddhāddvaita Vēdānta*, was born in 1479 as the son of a Telugu Brahmin in Raipūr in the Central Provinces, and he felt it his mission to expound the *Vēdānta*

Sūtraṣ by combating *Aḍvaita*. It is said that even at the age of fourteen, he took part in a *Vēdāntic* controversy at the court of Kṛṣṇarāya at Vijayanagar, and established the truths of *Brahmavāda* or *S'uddhādvaita* by exposing the fallacies of *Māyāvāda*. He extols the *Bhāgavata* as the fulfilment of the three *prasthānas*, namely, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Gītā* and the *Sūtras*. His commentary on the *Sūtras* known as *Anubhāṣya* and that on the *Bhāgavata* bring out the essentials of his philosophy of religion, though the latter is incomplete. The Brahman of the *Upaniṣads* or the *Paramātmān* of the *S'rutis* is the *Bhagavān* of the *Bhāgavata* or S'rī Kṛṣṇa, the supra-personal *Puruṣōttama* with a *vigraha* or body made of bliss. S'ṛi Kṛṣṇa, the highest Brahman, has a shining *aprākṛta* body made of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, and He eternally sports with the *jīva* in the *Gōlōka*. Next to *Puruṣōttama* is *Akṣara* Brahman having *sat*, *cit* and limited *ānanda*, and He appears as the *antaryāmin*. He who has mere *bhakti* does not attain the highest. The higher state called *puṣṭi bhakti* is the gift of God, and is *svarūpānanda* higher than *Brahmānanda*. Creation is the expression of Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, and is not the work of an external designer or a magic show. Owing to the power of *āvirbhāva* or manifestation, that is in *Para Brahman* as *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, the one overflows as the many. The world of matter emanates from *sat*, that of monadic *jīvas* radiates from *cit* and the *antaryāmins* are the outpourings of *ānanda*. The *jīva* is a spark of the shining Self, and is eternal, self-conscious and active, but, in the bound state of *saṃsāra*, has no *ānanda* or bliss. *Bhakti* is the only way of attaining divine bliss, and there are stages in the *sādhanas*. It is promoted by *s'ravaṇa*, *smaraṇa* and *kīrtana*. Those who meditate on the Lord by following the way of injunctions known as *maryādā mārga* or *s'āstrīya bhakti* attain *sāyujya* or

intimate communion; it is open only to *Dvijas*, and is difficult to practise in the *Kali Yuga*. But there is a higher state known as *puṣṭi bhakti* or the way of pure love which is a gift of God or *nirhētuka kaṭākṣa* and is accessible to all. Brahman is not only *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* but also *rasa*. *Rasa* is the enjoyment of the Love of Kṛṣṇa, as experienced by the *Gōpīs* with their instinct for Kṛṣṇa, who is therefore called *Gōpījanavallabha*. While *s'āstrīya bhakti* is mediate and progressive, *puṣṭi bhakti* is immediate, and requires no meditative effort. *Puṣṭi* is the inner sacrament or Brahma *saṃbandha*, which consists in *ātma nivēdana* or the dedication by the devotee of the self and all its belongings to the Lord to whom they really belong. *Puṣṭi bhakti* is the perfection of *prēma*, and the mystic blessed with Kṛṣṇa *prēma* gets the four kinds of *mukti*, and goes finally to *Gōlōka* beyond *Vaikuṇṭha*, and revels in communion with the ever sportive Gōpāla. It is *sēvā* rather than *pūjā* that matters, self-gift rather than worship or prayer; and a life consecrated to Kṛṣṇa has more value, especially in *Kali*, than the monastic life; but it pre-supposes the spirit of renunciation, which is hostile to the hedonistic temper. The consummation of *puṣṭi bhakti* is the intense love of the *Gōpīs* for Kṛṣṇa in the two stages of *saṃyōga* or union and *viprayōga* or separation followed by the immortal bliss of communion. The *S'uddhād-vaita* of Vallabha as a philosophy is allied more to *Vis'iṣṭā-dvaita* than to *Advaita* and its mysticism on the whole merits comparison with that of Nammāḷvār and Gōdā as interpreted by some of its exponents.

S'rī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, the founder of Bengal *Vaiṣṇavism*, was born in 1485 in Navadvīpa, the seat of Sanskrit learning in Bengal and the home of *Nyāya S'āstra*. At that time, the

atmosphere was charged with materialism, though a few followed the monism of S'aṅkara. Even in his boyhood, Caitanya attained mastery in grammar and *Nyāya*, and he wrote a very subtle work on *Nyāya*, which was later destroyed to appease the jealousy of his *Advaitic guru*, Raghunāth. Early in life, Caitanya became dissatisfied with *Advaita*. When he was initiated into *Vaiṣṇavism* by Īs'vara Pūri, a Madhva teacher at Gayā, he became intoxicated with Kṛṣṇa *prēma*. With his magnetic personality, his logical profundity and soul-stirring devotion, Caitanya spread the gospel of Kṛṣṇa *prēma* throughout the country. The philosophy of Caitanya treats of *viṣaya* or subject matter, *saṃbandha* or relation between God and the self, *abhidhēya* or the means of realizing Brahman and *prayōjana* or the highest end. This was elaborated by Bala Dēva who lived in the nineteenth century, in his *Bhāṣya* on the *Sūtras*, following the teaching of Pūrṇa Prajña. It is summed up in the formula that the absolute is Kṛṣṇa, the beautiful, the beloved and the blissful. The absolute manifests itself in three ways, as Brahman, *Paramātmān* and *Bhagavān*, and has infinite *s'aktis* of which the chief are *svarūpa s'akti*, *jīva s'akti* and *māyā s'akti*. *Bhagavān* as Kṛṣṇa is the absolute, and the concept of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa incarnate in Caitanya brings out the full import of Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. Kṛṣṇa *Bhagavān* has a bewitching form of unsurpassed and super-sensuous beauty with the three eternal *svarūpa s'aktis* or attributes of *sandhinī*, *saṃvit* and *hlādinī*, which correspond to *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, of which the last is the most important. They are *nirvis'ēṣa* in the potential state, and *savis'ēṣa* in the actualized condition. Brahman as *Bhagavān* is and has *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* and imparts these qualities to the *jīva*, and they are fully realized as *hlādinī* or bliss. *Mādhurya* or sweetness of love has more value in religion than the might

of *Īs'vara* ; and Kṛṣṇa as the sweetest of sweet love is a fuller expression of the divine nature than even Nārāyaṇa. Srī Kṛṣṇa is *advaya-jñāna-tattva* or the absolute beauty without a blemish, in whom essence and existence are one, with *mādhurya* as the chief quality. The universe is the *līlā* of the Lord of bliss, though it is only a partial expression caused by the concealing power of His *māyā s'akti*, and the true *līlā* is the eternal play of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as *rāsa līlā*. The *jīva*, as the *taṭastha s'akti* of *Bhagavān*, is eternal and self-luminous, and the relation between the *jīva* and *Bhagavān* is *acintya bhēdā-bhēda* like that of the sun and its luminosity.

Bhakti is the only means of attaining the bliss of Kṛṣṇa, and varies in intensity from *s'ānti rati* or the joy of the peace to *madhura rati* or the joy of divine deliciousness. *Bhakti*, as the logic of the heart, arises from, and arouses, the bliss potency of S'rī Kṛṣṇa, and it consists in love for love's sake, and does not seek any boon. *Prīti* or love gradually develops into a longing and admits of five stages. Kṛṣṇa *prēma* is divinely rooted, and it is not soiled by carnality or hedonistic motives. In the second stage, called *sukha prēma*, *bhakti* melts the heart and makes it glow with the fire of the love of Kṛṣṇa. In the third stage of *praṇaya*, love becomes invasive, and it assaults the Lover. Its effect is heightened in *māna* in which *bhakti* compels the Lover to yield to the challenge of love's labour and loyalty. In the fifth stage of *rāga*, even severe pain is welcomed as a joy, if it has the content of Kṛṣṇa *prēma*. In *anurāga*, *rāga* becomes irrepressible and deepens into the maddening love of *mahābhāva* like that of Rādhā. *Bhakti rasa* is spontaneous and intrinsic and not the effect of scriptural injunction, and it is unconditioned. Love is love for ever more and is never lost, and is ever fecundative. The

philosophy of *bhakti*, according to Caitanya, is an explication of the spiritual moods or *bhāvas* of Kṛṣṇa *prēma* in the ascending order of intimacy culminating in *madhura bhāva*. The Caitanya school stresses the *mādhurya* aspect of *Vaiṣṇavism* as the *summum bonum* of religious life, and has no use for the over-awing power of *Īs'vara*. The first mood is *Brahmānanda* or *yōgic* absorption in the absolute or Brahman who is the eternal lustre of the blissful body of *Bhagavān*. *S'ānti rati* is the result of devotional reverence to Nārāyaṇa and not the bliss of Bṛndāvana. *Dāsya prīti* is loving service to S'rī Kṛṣṇa as the cosmic ruler, and is based on reverence to the Lord. But it is an impediment to the free flow of love. *Sakhya rati* or the joy of friendship overcomes the creature consciousness of the *bhakta* and promotes the sense of equality and fellowship. In *vātsalya rati* or the joy of affection like that of Yas'ōdā for the darling Kṛṣṇa, love deepens into tenderness. *Madhura rati* is Kṛṣṇa *prēma par excellence*, and it bursts the barriers of conventional religion and artificial discipline. It is the consummation of disciplined devotion and not its cancellation. Kṛṣṇa *prēma* thrives only in the soil of pure love, and has its roots in self-renouncement and its fruition in the relish of the *rasa* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The beauties of nature and the music of the spheres are but a partial expression of the infinite beauty of Kṛṣṇa, and the irresistibility of His love is epitomized in the *mahābhāva* of Rādhā. Absolute beauty divides itself into the forms of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to enjoy the double fruition of love. While meditation on Brahman gives mere *s'ānti* emptied of the warmth of love, and devotion to Nārāyaṇa is holy love to His *ais'varya* as it is in *Vaikuṇṭha*, Kṛṣṇa *prēma* is love for love's sake in which the lover and the beloved sport with each other for ever and forget their otherness in the ecstasy of love. Kṛṣṇa *prēma* is as opposed to

viṣaya rāga, as light is opposed to darkness, and has no tinge of egoism. *Madhura bhāva* transcends the logical and moral disciplines detailed in the *bhakti s'āstra* like *s'āstraic* faith, *upāsanā* and *sādhu saṅgha*. Mere *jñāna* or *yōga* cannot open the flood-gates of the bliss potency of *Bhagavān*. It is only in the maddened love of *madhura bhāva* that the barriers of thought and will are broken. Then self-feeling is consumed in the fire of flaming love. Truth leads to goodness, goodness shines through beauty and beauty is consummated in Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. Love is no doubt a two-sided affair, but the feeling of separateness is overpowered in the ecstasy of union.

The nature of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa love is beautifully dramatized by Saint Jayadēva who lived in the twelfth century, in his immortal lyric poem called the *Gīta Gōvinda*. It is the allegory of a ripe soul having a genius for Kṛṣṇa *prēma* yearning for the ecstasy of union. The mystic love of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa can be truly discerned spiritually and not by the worldly-minded man steeped in sensuality. The plot starts with the sports of Kṛṣṇa with the other *Gōpīs* which moves the heart of Rādhā and excites her jealously. The Lord of Love is in all hearts and cannot be exclusively possessed by any one mystic ; and when Rādhā claims possession of Kṛṣṇa, He disappears suddenly. Remorse-stricken, she pines away in gloom and waits with divinest love. In the next scene, Kṛṣṇa has a vision of Rādhā's anguish and filled with unspeakable longing, He languishes in loneliness. Brahman has no joy in being *ēkākī*, and His delight is in dallying with love. Love mediates between beauty and its *alter ego*. Pierced by the shafts of Rādhā-love, Kṛṣṇa pines in grief, and is filled with cheerless melancholy. Rādhā is incensed at her unrequited love, suffers from the pain of *vipralaṃbha*, and

chides Him for His faithlessness. The Lord is really a jealous God, and unless the *bhakta* is stripped of his egoism and seeks Him as his sole refuge, he does not merit His saving grace. But Kṛṣṇa regards the *jñānī* who loves Him as His very life and closer than breath itself. *Vaikuṇṭha* is itself worthless to the Lord if it is without the love of the *jñānī*. In the next scene, Kṛṣṇa is stricken with remorse and pleads with her to place her feet on His head as a mark of forgiveness. The story is told that Jayadēva regretted the irreverent tone of the last sentence and left it blank; but in his absence, Kṛṣṇa came and inserted the line "Place your feet on my head." The idea that, in the fulness of His *saulabhya*, the Lord seeks to efface Himself in the service of His devotee is a commonplace in *Vaiṣṇavism*, and Kṛṣṇa is *saulabhya* in a concrete form. The fire of Kṛṣṇa *prēma* fed by *vairāgya* exceeds that of carnal love just as solar light exceeds lamp light, and when love becomes infinite longing for the infinite, Kṛṣṇa can no longer resist it, and repress His own love. The lovers at last meet and rush into each other's arms, and are lost in the immortal bliss of union. The negative way of *vis'lēṣa* thus leads to the affirmation of divine union. The Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult is a northern version of the *nāyaka-nāyakī bhāva* experienced by the *Āḻvārs*. The art of divine love as portrayed in the *Vaiṣṇava* teaching of *nāyaka-nāyakī bhāva* or *mahābhāva* refers to a mystic experience which transcends sensuous love. Every form of *Vaiṣṇavite* mysticism is sensual in garb but has a spiritual meaning.

While the *Vaiṣṇavism* of Vallabha and Caitanya stresses the mystic side of Kṛṣṇa *līlā* perfected in the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa relation, the *bhakti* movement of Mahārāṣṭra brings out its social side and the need for the democratic diffusion of *bhakti* to

all humanity. It also emphasizes the worship of Kṛṣṇa as the lord of Rukmiṇī and not of Rādhā. It is closely related to the cult of Rāmānanda of Benares who is identified with the teacher of Jñānes'vara's father. Jñānes'vara is the founder of the *bhakti* school in Mahārāṣṭra. The *bhakta* does not reason God but feels Him as his very life. *Bhakti*, however, presupposes the renunciation of *ahaṅkāṛa* and the knowledge of the self and its relation to *Bhagavān* who is worshipped as Viṭhōbā. Inner devotion is more vital than conformity to customary morality, and is the very *ṣine qua non* of spirituality. Ascetic self-repression has no value for the *bhakta* as he treats the body as the very temple of God. *Bhakti* blossoms like the lotus at the dawn of sun-light, when the *bhakta* realizes God. Owing to the immanence of God in all *jīvas*, what is possible to one man is possible to every man and the true test of *bhakti* is in service to humanity. *Bhakti* is said to be ninefold, and each form has its own efficacy in securing salvation. The chief forms are *s'ravaṇa* or listening to the glory and goodness of God as Parīkṣit did, *kīrtana* or singing the songs of divine love like Nārada, *smaraṇa* or the loving reverence of the Lord's love like Prahlāda's, devotion to God and godly men like that of Akrūra, service like that of Hanumān, faith in God's fellowship like that of Arjuna and self-surrender like that of Bali. Mere visions and auditions are psychic states which should not be confused with mystic realization. When the mystic speaks of the touches and thrills of God, he uses only sense symbolism in his desire for a realistic description.

Among the well-known *bhaktas* or mystics of Māharāṣṭra are Nāmdev, Ēknāth, Tukārām and Rāmdās who lay stress on "the social, synthetic, personal and activistic aspects of

mysticism." Nāmdev (1270-1350), born in a tailor's family, was addicted to robbery in his youth, but was seized with remorse which led to his redemption by the grace of God. His devotional outpourings to Paṇḍarināth are embodied in his *abhaṅgas* which are well-known for their devotional fervour. He holds that a contrite heart is more acceptable to Pāṇḍuraṇga than wealthy offerings without it. The removal of egoism is more important than the practice of vows and vigils. Not by pilgrimage nor by austerity but only by inner purity can He be seen face to face. Ēknāth (1533-1598) dedicated himself to the service of God by singing *saṅkīrtans* in Marāthi and his life is an example of a *bhakta* who did the duties of his station in life with his mind fixed always in the inner Divinity in all beings. The true *bhakta* realizes God everywhere. He had no faith in caste distinctions and it is said that, at one time, he gave to the untouchables the food offered to his *pitṛs*. Tukārām (1607-1649), the son of a farmer near Poona, was sorely tried by God and subjected to intense suffering. But, unlike Ēknāth, he felt that godliness could not be compromised with worldly life and at one time he refused presents from Sivāji; he courted misery to enable him to seek His mercy in the dark night of the soul. Service to God is superior to salvation. His *bhakti* became so intense that at one time in a mood of desperation, he decided on suicide, when he had a direct vision of God and enjoyed blessedness. Rāmdās (1608-1681 A.D.) was an ardent devotee of Rama and after a severe trial was blessed with direct Divine experience. As the spiritual teacher of Sivāji he instilled into him the courage to conquer the Muhammadan invader, returned the kingdom offered to him by Sivāji and helped him in the re-establishment of righteous rule. His *Dāsabōdha* contains his spiritual autobiography. By self-surrender or *ātmanivedana*, the highest kind of *bhakti*, the

bhakta became one (*vibhakta*) with God by His grace and finally attained *sāyujya*. True spirituality, to him, lies in the performance of duty with the heart set on God, and all people are spiritually one though socially different.

S'aiva Siddhānta is the systematic exposition of the *S'rutis*, the *S'aiva Āgamas* and the experiences of the *Nāyanmārs*, and in its philosophic aspect as formulated by Srīkaṇṭha, the commentator on the *Sūtras*, it compels comparison with the essentials of Rāmānuja's system though there are radical differences between the two in theology and ritualism. It accepts realism and *satkāryavāda* and posits three ultimate realities, *Pati*, *pas'u* and *pās'am*, which can be distinguished but not separated. *Pati* is the Supreme Lord S'iva who is formless, as He transcends the limitations of *prakṛti* and yet, out of mercy, He assumes eight spiritual forms, but does not incarnate like Viṣṇu. S'iva and S'akti are inseparable like fire and heat and *S'iva-s'akti* brings out the dynamic love of the Godhead and the redemptive principle of grace. *Pas'u* or the soul is caught up in *pās'am* and the confusions of *karma* and becomes a mode of matter. By moral and spiritual discipline it can realize itself and become a mode of God. Religion is the transition from *ātmadars'ana* to *S'ivadars'ana* as the *jīva* without S'iva is like the consonant without the vowel, and *mukti* or *sāyujya* consists in intuiting S'iva as love and becoming one with Him. *Mukti* is not the loss of personality, but is self-effacement in the service of S'iva. From the pragmatic standpoint, *S'aiva Siddhānta* is not much different from *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* if it accepts the theory of the immanent causality of Brahman as expounded by the *Sūtrakāra* and the redemptive purpose of *avatāra* as revealed in the *Gītā*. The *S'rīkara Bhāṣya* on the *Sūtras* by S'rīpati expounds *Vīras'aivism* from the *Bhēdābhēda* standpoint

and is called *Vis'ēṣādvaita.* It refutes *Māyāvāda* and rejects *Pāñcarātra Āgama* and by stressing *Vīras'aivism*, it is contrasted with the school of S'rīkaṇṭha which is interpreted by Appayya Dīkṣita in terms of *Advaita.*

Sikhism is a virile type of ethical religion which has affinities with *Vaiṣṇavism* in its protestant and democratic aspects. Its founder, Guru Nanak, was born in 1469, a few years before Luther, and it was his mission to stress the essentials of religion by rejecting formalism and ceremonialism and to bring out the common features of Hinduism and Islam. Sikhism affirms its faith in monotheism and metempsychosis, but rejects caste exclusiveness and social distinctions. The Sikh worships the *Ādi Grantha Sāheb* as a divine revelation, but he does not accept the infallibility of *Vēdic* authority and the value of image worship. All men live, move and have their being in God and they belong to God as much as God belongs to them. The world is itself the temple of *Hari* and the true *Guru* is Brahman or *Hari.* The *jīva* is immortal and though he suffers from *karma* and the ills of *saṃsāra*, he can attain *mōkṣa* by *bhakti* and faith in the *Guru.* The disciple distinguishes between the eternal and the temporal, renounces worldliness though he lives in the world as an active member of society, and seeks to become one with God by repeating *Hari-mantra* and attaining the *Guru's* grace. The ten *gurus* represent respectively the ten cardinal virtues of humility, obedience, equality of all *jīvas*, service, self-sacrifice, justice, mercy, purity, calmness and courage. Evil is a moral taint like lying, lust and love of wealth and it lapses into sin when it becomes disobedience of the divine law; the root cause of sin is *ahaṅkāra.* True living is higher than truth and it is the life of devotion to the *Guru* and God.

Freedom consists in becoming one with God and attaining eternal life. Sikhism stresses the monotheistic faith and fervour of *Vaiṣṇavism* and its ethical teaching of spiritual democracy.

The Brahma Samāj accepts the theory of natural revelation and draws its inspiration mainly from the *Upaniṣads*, but rejects the doctrine of supernatural and miraculous revelation and also the scepticism of *māyāvāda*. Each individual has the innate power of inferring the existence of God or Brahman and intuiting Him by saying " My existence is self-evident, and since I am, Brahman also exists." This intuitive experience (*ātma pratyaya*) is spontaneous and self-evident and possible to all individuals, and *Brahma Vidyā* is the rational exposition of spiritual experiences, and is monotheistic and not monistic. Intuition is the fulfilment of reason and is not opposed to it. The proof of the existence of God is fourfold, the cosmological, the teleological, the ontological and the moral, and it shows the four stages of human development. The first is the physical proof that God is the cosmic cause. The second is the biological argument that *Īs'vara* is the Designer of the universe. The third is the philosophical idea of *Īs'vara* as the supreme Reality. The last is the moral proof that He is morally perfect. These proofs bring out respectively the power, wisdom, infinity and holiness of God. Every scripture is a revelation of God, and is worthy of respect, though the *Upaniṣads* form the main source of the teaching of the Samājists as spiritual children of the *ṛs'is*. The chief attributes of Brahman are *satyaṃ*, *jñānaṃ*, *anantaṃ*, *ānandaṃ*, *s'ivaṃ*, *advaitaṃ* and *s'uddhaṃ*. The first three are metaphysical ideas, and they define His nature (*svarūpa lakṣaṇa*) as the true of the true, the all-knowing and the infinite. As concrete infinite, He is

One without a second as the Soul of all selves, and there cannot be two infinites. The moral attribute is the idea of God as the holy and the pure. God is essentially love, and His love transcends human love. He is infinitely blissful, and makes others happy.

Daily life is hallowed by the loving remembrance of God and by worship which is congregational as well as private. Worship of God consists of *ārādhana*, *dhyāna* and *prārthana*, and *ātma samarpaṇa* and it is purely spiritual. *Ārādhana* is the adoration of God by dwelling on His attributes. *Dhyāna* is the practice of the presence of God, and is a higher stage than *ārādhana*. *Prārthana* is a spiritual prayer which consists in seeking the guidance of God. The three forms of devotion based on faith, love and holiness form the essence of religion. In congregational or Samāj worship, *ārādhana* is done by the chanting of selected *Upaniṣadic mantras*, and it is followed by *dhyāna* or silent meditation. The *upāsaka* prays in the *Upaniṣadic* way by uttering the hymn "Lead me from untruth to truth, from darkness to light, and from death to immortality. Oh, merciful One, protect us by Thy mercy." Love and service constitute the true worship of God. The Samājist insists on the attainment of inward holiness and the practice of truth and kindness in individual and social life. The knowledge that Brahman is *sarvajña* and the *jīva* is *alpajña* fosters humility. The Samājist has no faith in the elaborate rituals associated with popular religion, in image worship and the need for incarnations; but he has a living faith in God as the Soul of our souls. Brahman is *ananta* and *niravayava*, and idolatry and incarnation are opposed to the infinitude of Brahman. The Brahmo is also opposed to caste distinctions, as he thinks that the caste system conflicts

with the promotion of the virtue of human brotherhood, and he thinks it a duty to break the restrictions of caste and abolish the whole system. Brahmoism affirms the eternity of the self and its gradual progress towards perfection, in which the self becomes one with God in knowing, willing and feeling; but it rejects the monistic view that in *mukti* there is loss of personality. Rājā Rām Mōhan Rāi, the founder, was born in 1770 in Murshidabad and his culture was essentially liberal. The basis of the creed is intuition and the book of nature. Dēvēndranāth Tāgore was attracted by the beauty of the *Upaniṣads* and its theism. Keshub Chander Sen was predisposed towards *Vaiṣṇavism* and the religion of *bhakti*. The two scriptures are the volume of nature and intuitions implanted in the mind. The mercy and wisdom of God are written on the universe. God never becomes man by assuming a human body. *Yōga* is *Vēdic* or objective, *Vēdāntic* or subjective and *Paurāṇic* or *Bhakti Yōga*. The first refers to God in nature, the second to the soul of our souls and the third is the realization of God working in history and in individual life. Brahmoism is claimed to be the essence of all religions, and is not an eclecticism that merely collects bits of truth. Salvation is the deliverance of the soul from moral disease. The New Dispensation founded by Sen proclaims the unity of all creeds. There is one music but many instruments; one body but many limbs. It stresses the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. God is *Hari* who takes away evil and sin. The theistic and mystic aspects of Brahmoism are largely and increasingly influenced by *Vaiṣṇavism*.

The Ārya Samāj was founded by Svāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati (1824-1883) in the year 1872 A.D. and its main object was not the inauguration of a new religion, but the

resuscitation of *Vēdic* authority and reformation of the *varṇās'rama* ideal. He proved the infallibility of *Vēdic* revelation and the universality of its moral and spiritual truths. He held that the *Vēdic* religion was the fountain-head of religions, but did not accept the antithesis between reason and faith and the later revelations based on supernaturalism. He affirmed the eternal existence of matter, soul and God, but distinguished them by saying that matter exists as *sat*, soul or *ātman* as *cit* and God or *Paramātman* as *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. True *upāsana* consists in the worship of God as *saguṇa* or pure and perfect and *nirguṇa* as free from evil and other imperfections, and thus attaining *mukti*. Though the Samāj rejects the faith in image worship and the perpetuation of *varṇās'rama* based on birth, it has some affinity with *Vaiṣṇavite* theism and is likely to be deeply influenced by *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* thought.

Any account of modern Hinduism will be incomplete if it does not recognize the disinterested services rendered by Mrs. Besant to the cause of its revival in general and Kṛṣṇaism in particular at a time when Indian intellectuals were steeped in naturalism and agnosticism and Hinduism was threatened with extinction.

The life and teachings of S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa are an inspiring example, in modern times, of the manifold ways in which the seeker after God sees God and realizes the synthetic unity of all religions. As a supermystic, he experimented with the truths of religion, sought to experience God in all His manifestations, and communicated the joy of such communion to humanity. In his strenuous *sādhana* for twelve years, S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa acquired so much mastery over the desires of sensibility that his body would automatically recoil from contact with coins

and other worldly things, and he would regard every woman as the living manifestation of the divine Mother. He practised the varieties of *Vaiṣṇavite sādhanas* and *bhāvas* like *vātsalya* and *dāsya* as elaborated by Caitanya and his spiritual quest bore immediate fruit. With a view to attaining the right attitude of a *dāsa* he imitated Hanumān, and it is reported that, when his practice became perfect, he had actually an enlargement of the coccyx by about an inch. By ceaseless thinking on the sufferings of Sītā he felt that his life was likewise a tale of woe. When *bhakti* deepens into the ardour of *Gōpī* love, the lover is caught up in the flame, and this experience known as *mahābhāva* is the culmination of all *bhāvas*. Overpowered by the maddening love for Kṛṣṇa, S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa lost himself for six months in the agony of separation from the Lord, and it is said that minute drops of blood oozed out from the pores of his skin. God-possession is a malady of the mystic which is beyond the province of the medical materialist and the psycho-analyst, and is cured only by the mystic becoming one with God. The saint likewise practised many other *sādhanas*, and his chief message to the modern world is his insistence on the equal efficacy of the four *yōgas* as steps to realization and the unity of all religions. Though the Rāmakṛṣṇa Mission gives the highest place to *Advaita*, the mysticism of S'rī Râmakṛṣṇa recognizes the equality of *jñāna* and *bhakti* and the saving power of God's grace; and such a synthetic attitude augurs well for the promotion of inter-*Vēdāntic* understanding. The *Vaiṣṇavite* experiences of the saint resemble those of Nammāḷvār in many respects and reveal a more or less common incarnational descent.

The famous song of the true *Vaiṣṇava* made popular by Mahātmā Gāndhi brings out the character of the *Vaiṣṇava* :

" He is the true *Vaiṣṇava* who knows and feels
Another's woes as his own.
Ever ready to serve, he never boasts.
He bows to every one and despises no one,
Keeping his thought, word, and deed pure.
Blessed is the mother of such an one. He
Reverences every woman as his mother.
He keeps an equal mind and does not
Stain his lips with falsehood ; nor
Does he touch another's wealth.
No bonds of attachment can hold him.
Ever in tune with Rāma *nāma*, his body
Possesses in itself all places of pilgrimage.
Free from greed and deceit, passion
And anger, this is the true *Vaiṣṇava*."

In instituting a comparison between *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic Vaiṣṇavism* and the Semitic religions and discovering their affinities, the method of approach should be based more on personal mystic experience than on supernaturalism and historicity. Institutional or official Christianity seeks to prove that the Bible is the only book of revelation, Jesus the only begotten Son of God and World Saviour and the church the only chosen community of God ; and that the Kṛṣṇa of the *Gītā* who resembles Christ in many ways is a mythical figure and the Kṛṣṇa of the *Bhāgavata* defies all the law of ethics and the rules of religion. But God fulfils Himself in various ways, and to a seeker after God, the idea that He is the in-dwelling Love in every man, who is the son of God, is more inspiring than the beliefs in supernaturalism and historicity. Standardized Christianity has, however, changed with time and place, as it got its theology mainly from Greece, its

organization from Rome and its faith in personal worth as opposed to Papacy from the Protestant countries. In India with its spirituality and genius for *Vēdāntic* life, the Sermon on the Mount will find its philosophic justification in the Divine Song on the chariot and its *Vēdāntic* experience will afford the rational and spiritual basis for Christian mysticism. At any rate, a sympathetic study of Nammāḷvār and the Nazarene is sure to establish spiritual contacts between *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* and Indian Christianity as the two historic religions of redemption, and bring out the truth that the union of retributive law and redemptive love embodied in the twin ideas of the Fatherhood and motherhood of the Godhead as Nārāyaṇa and S'rī with their historic incarnations in humanity in moments of moral and spiritual crises is the surest guarantee for *mukti* and the most inspiring gospel of universal salvation or *sarva mukti.* But it is in mysticism that Christianity meets *Vaiṣṇavism* and finds a philosophic justification. The mystic with his hunger for the Absolute is more interested in realizing God than in reasoning about Him, and there are three stages in God-realization known as purgation, illumination and the joy of unitive consciousness, which roughly correspond to *Karma Yōga*, *Jñāna Yōga* and *Bhakti Yōga.* When the soul realizes itself by self-stripping, its homing instinct asserts itself and it longs for union with God, and at last becomes immersed in the eternal bliss of divine union. Christian mysticism becomes fully coherent when it recognizes the eternity of the self or *ātman*, the indwelling of God as the *s'arīrin* and the true meaning of salvation as *sāyujya.*

Islam has shown more tenacity and group feeling than any other world religion, and in its theological rigidity

and loyalty to the founder, it has established the fact that faith can be standardized and made uniform. The student of the history of mediaeval India interested in comparative religion will find affinities and contrasts between the monotheistic fervour of Islam and the virile *Vaiṣṇavite* faiths in North India in the aspect of personal as opposed to institutional religion. He will also note the attempts to avoid deadly conflicts between Hinduism and Islam by devotees like Kabīr, whose very life was universal religion in action. There is a striking similarity between Sūfi and *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* experience, and the Indian Sūfi with his spiritual instinct is sure to discover in virile *Vaiṣṇavite* mysticism a philosophy of religion which guarantees God to all persons, and affords a philosophic basis for spiritual democracy. Sūfism is essentially mystic as it defines religion as the spiritual quest of the self for union with the in-dwelling God of love. Godhead is God and He reveals Himself in the five planes of essence, attributes, actions, similitudes and ocular vision which roughly correspond to *para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *antaryāmin* and *arcā*.[1] The soul dies as a mineral to become a plant, dies as a plant to become animal, dies as animal to become man and will die as man to return to God. Each soul is a ray of the eternal sun or God, lives and moves in Him. Divine beatitude is realized in four stages when the soul is freed from the body and reunites with God from whom it was separated, but never divided. In the ocean of divine love 'I' and 'thou' get dissolved, but are not destroyed. Sūfism is thus akin to Rāmānuja's idea of God as Love and will become fully justified if it accepts the eternity of the *ātman*, the immanence of *Paramātman* and the eventual *ātmanization* of all selves.

[1] Gōvindācārya Svāmin's *Metaphysique of Mysticism*, Section XII.

Every monotheistic religion is anxious to disseminate its faith and increase its fold, but in its zeal for proselytization, it develops a monopolistic and military mentality which stifles the *sātvika* spirit. Its dogmas are often deduced from blind beliefs which form the major premise of fanaticism, and the conclusions have a compelling and coercive force, starting with terrorism and ending with persecution. The deductive method has often been an ally of dogmatism and exclusiveness, and it is only the inductive method of spiritual experimentation and verification that has furnished the corrective to the perils of fanaticism. The history of '*Vīra*' *Vaiṣṇavism* shows that it is no exception to this rule; but if its *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* inwardness is developed, it sheds its exclusiveness and becomes expansive. The idea of God as the *s'arīrin* of all and as in-dwelling Love offers the most inspiring motive for philosophic enlightenment and the achievement of social solidarity. Sūfism and *Vēdāntism* have their meeting ground only in the forum of this philosophic faith.

The claims of vital *Vaiṣṇavism* to be a universal religion can be established by a liberal reinterpretation of its teachings in the light of the modern methods of criticism without in any way sacrificing its fundamentals. The history of its growth itself proves the truth that in its critical periods of conflict with alien religions, it has responded to the changing times by concentrating on essentials or *sārāsāra vivēka* without insisting on the need for conformity to customary morality and *ācāras* and standardization of thought. In this method, what is required is a comparative study of the varieties of *Vaiṣṇavite* sects and experiences with a view to finding out their common features, and correlating them with the central truths of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. Each sect has developed its own

doctrines and rituals in accordance with the needs of its *Guru paramparā* and *saṃpradāya*, and it is necessary to study the history of their growth as determined by the nature of the disposition of its followers and the environment in which they were placed, if we are to eliminate the non-essentials and discern only the foundational truths. Each sect has stressed certain specific aspects. For example, the schools of South Indian *Vaiṣṇavism* are known for their philosophical subtlety and thoroughness. The Mahārāṣtra variety has stressed the need for the establishment of the spiritual brotherhood of humanity by spreading the gospel of *bhakti* to all, and arresting the iconoclastic zeal of hostile faiths. The ethical and monotheistic fervour of *Vaiṣṇavism* is brought into prominence in the sects of Northern India. In its revitalized and virile form, it has become popular in the Punjab, which has always withstood the onslaught of Islam. The Caitanya cult in Bengal has specialized in the mysticism associated with the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and the same interest in the *Bhāgavata* religion is noticeable in the Vallabha devotion to Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. The Brahma Samāja stemmed the tide of Christian proselytization by reinterpreting it in terms of Hinduism or *Vaiṣṇavism* and thus absorbing it. Christ is accepted as a Son of God but churchianity, which makes him the only Son of God, is rejected. The teachings of Rabīndranāth Tāgore, Aurabindo Ghosh, Mahātma Gāndhi and S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa have contributed not a little to the resuscitation of Hinduism in general and *Vaiṣṇavism* in particular. If the term Hinduism means, as its letters imply, the *theory* of the *h*istory of the *u*nity of *n*ature serving as a fitting environment for the knowledge of the *i*ndividual as the eternal and immutable *ātman* and the realization by him of the *D*eity that is immanent in all beings as their *s'arīrin*, then it is the same as Religion and

coeval with *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic Vaiṣṇavism.* It takes into account the *unity* of physical nature, the need for *self-realization* and union with *Divinity* that is in every individual. The history of religions in India shows that religion is one though its manifestations are varied. Religion has a future if its essentials are distinguished from the non-essentials and not identified with mere rituals, dogmas or myths. The religion of the future consists in the realization of God or *Bhagavān* and communicating Godliness to others. It is the eternal religion of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* realized in different ways through the ages.

CHAPTER XXII

CONCLUSION

SECTION I

THE threads of the various arguments developed in the preceding chapters may now be gathered together as a single synthetic whole made of parts which are vitally related. The traditional method of the Indian philosophers consists in establishing their own *siddhānta* by the refutation of rival systems, and each system fortifies its position by stating all the *pūrva pakṣas* or possible objections to it and demolishing them. But this dialectic warfare was conducted in an atmosphere of disinterested criticism in conformity with recognized methods of textual and philosophical interpretation. The high level of intellectual honesty and moral and spiritual earnestness that marked their polemical warfare is often brought out in the conduct of the defeated opponent becoming the disciple of the victorious philosopher and cheerfully seeking his spiritual guidance. The conversions made by Buddha, S'aṅkara, Rāmānuja, Pūrṇaprajña, Caitanya and others were due to inner conviction, and not to coercion, and the saving spiritual quality of the teacher. The disappearance of many systems of thought prevalent at the time of Buddha and of *Vēdāntic* schools like *Bhēdābhēda* may be traced to the struggle

of moral and spiritual ideals for existence and the survival of the best. At any rate, the popularity of the three schools of *Vēdānta* in modern times is due to their innate vitality and their power to satisfy the religious and philosophic needs of their followers. The system of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* has stood the test of ages and its future rests on the capacity and character of its followers to live up to its lofty traditions and to spread its message to the whole world. The supreme duty of its present day follower lies in his presentation of the essentials of the system by freeing it from the excrescences which are inevitable in institutional religion and its re-orientation in terms of modern thought without impairing its integrity. The attempt is made in this concluding chapter to sum up the central truths of the *siddhānta* without entering into controversial discussions, and estimate its value as a synthetic philosophy of religion claiming to have a universal appeal. The logical method of exposition adopted in the whole work is eminently suitable to the study of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and will be followed in the concluding survey also.

The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* theory of *pramāṇas* seeks to reconcile the conflicting claims of reason and revelation through the mediating link of spiritual realization, and steers a middle course between dogmatism and intellectualism. The *Vēda* is the breath of Brahman, and is, in an extended sense, a body of impersonal spiritual truths, which can be tested by the faith of reason and the authority of intuitive experience. This way of knowing Brahman does full justice to the threefold authority of *s'ruti*, *yukti* and *anubhava*, and accepts the supreme validity and value of the *Vēda* as the eternal foundation of Truth, on which the founders of systems and sects rely for their support. The tradition of Vāmadēva, S'vētakētu, Bōdhāyana, Prahlāda

and Nammāḷvār is continued through the ages in spite of historic irrelevances. In the same way, there is a continuity in the kingdoms of knowledge given in sense-perception and spiritual and religious experience corresponding to the three kinds of existence, *acit*, *cit* and Brahman. In all cases, knowledge is relational, and relation is the mother category of metaphysics. Every judgment expresses a subject-object relation and the ultimate subject is the supreme Self. It is thus possible to know the absolute by the absolute knowledge of every object and subject of knowledge when *jñāna* is purified and perfected as in *mukti*. *Acit* and *cit* have their meaning and value only in Brahman, the ultimate subject of all knowledge, perceptual, spiritual and religious. In the same way, there is a continuity in the three tests of truth, pragmatism, correspondence and coherence, based on the principle that truth is a progress from the partial to the perfect, and that there is nothing unreal. Psychology, logic, ethics, philosophy and religion are inter-related, and every theory of truth has its own value in the synthetic scheme of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. In practical life or *vyavahāra*, the pragmatic test is relevant and fruitful; it relates logic to psychology and defines truth as fidelity to relevant facts satisfying the practical needs of life. But it has no finality. The realist's test of correspondence does justice to the reality of the external world, when he defines truth as fidelity to facts on the ground that *jñāna* reveals objects as they are. In nature things belong together and even error is privation of knowledge and contains an element of truth. Even illusions and the imagined objects of fiction subsist and are as real as facts that exist. But realism does not go far enough, as it does not stress the priority and primacy of the experiencing subject or self and the all-inclusive nature of the supreme Self. The idealistic view of

coherence recognizes the value of internal relations and the work of thought, and includes the correspondence view in an extended sense. But it does not go far enough, as it may lapse into subjectivism. The coherence of *jñāna* is based on the immanent criterion that truth is the whole, includes the more of itself and is ahead of us though it is now circumscribed, owing to the absence of logical and moral discipline. Purified knowledge is a progression from the perceptual and the conceptual levels to the integral intuition of the whole of Reality in *mukti*. The *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* theory re-interprets that of external relations in terms of internal relation, and the latter in terms of the organic relation of *sarīra-sarīrin*. The All-Self can be known by the finite self, when its consciousness which is now of the earth earthy, is purified, and expands into all-comprehensive knowledge. Truth is then not inferred but divined and the *mukta* sees all things in Brahman and Brahman in all things. Thus epistemology in its extended sense affirms the knowability of Reality in all its levels.

The theory of knowledge is the theory of the knowledge of reality, and thus leads to ontology. To apprehend that Brahman is, is to comprehend what He is, and therefore Brahman is *saguṇa*, and is defined as real Reality, *satyasya satyaṃ*, the inner subject of all thinking beings and the ever blissful Self. As the *sat*, Brahman exists in, and for, itself, and is self-contained. It is the One that pervades the many, but does not pass over into the many. It is the Absolute that is the Fact of facts, and is the True of the true, as it includes *cit-acit* and exceeds their content and value. The metaphysical highest is also the ethical highest and Brahman as *ādhāra* becomes *Īs'vara* as *niyantā*, who is the righteous ruler of all and who dispenses justice according to the *karma* of the

individual. This view reconciles the conflict between omnipotence and righteousness. *Īs'vara*, as *s'ēsī* or *svāmī*, is the way as well as the goal of life, and every *karma* is *kainkarya* or worship of the Lord, who is the ultimate actor in the moral and spiritual world. Brahman exists in five forms, the eternal in the world beyond, the infinite that creates the finite, the immanent that resides in all beings and the incarnations, historical as well as permanent, and the inner purpose of this fivefold function is to enter into humanity and redeem it from its *avidyā-karma*. The threefold relation between Brahman and the world of *cit-acit* is explained by the *S'ārīraka S'āstra* in terms of the comprehensive term *s'arīra-s'arīrī sambandha*. It means that the finite is rooted in the infinite, sustained by its will, and serves its redemptive end as a free agent. This view reconciles the claims of monism and theism and those of transcendence and immanence. Brahman is the *s'arīrin* in this special sense, and is the life of our life and the inner Ruler immortal in all beings; and every term, thing or thought that connotes the *s'arīra* also connotes the *s'arīrin* as He enters into *cit* and *acit* and gives them name and form.

The cosmology of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* follows from its ontological view of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of the universe of *cit-acit* by a suitable application of *satkārya-vāda*. The *sat* without a second, which is undifferentiated in *pralaya*, differentiates itself into the world of *nāma-rūpa*. The precreational stage is a real possibility in which *cit* and *acit* are pre-existent in a subtle but indistinguishable way and not non-existent, and in *sṛṣṭi* the potential becomes actual. In both the stages Brahman exists with its *prakāras* as modes. The Absolute, according to Rāmānuja, is not Brahman and the world of *cit* and *acit* in the mathematical sense but is

Brahman in the world in the metaphysical sense. The three are distinguishable but not divisible, eternal, but not, external. Brahman enters into the world as its immanent cause, but is unaffected by the world process and is therefore transcendental. This view reconciles the logical or pantheistic view and the ethical or deistic view. The process of nature is in the interests of the progress of the self and both subserve the inner purpose of Brahman to grow into the universe with a view to the moulding of *muktas*. *Vēdānta* without cosmology would be mere *ātmavidyā* leading to subjectivism and not *Brahmavidyā*, and the chief value of cosmology lies in its insistence on the truth that the ground of the universe is also the subject of religious meditation.

Vis'iṣṭādvaitic psychology has a metaphysical basis, and refers to a plurality of eternal and immutable *jīvas* having *jñāna* as their essential attribute, The *jīva* is an atomic or infinitesimal entity; but its intelligence is infinite, though limited or circumscribed by *karma*. Selfhood is presupposed in the mental process consisting of cognitive, affective and conative factors, and it alone gives meaning to the unity and continuity of the psychic complex in all its normal and abnormal states. The *jīva* is substance-attribute ; it is a *vis'ēṣya* and *vis'ēṣaṇa* with monadic uniqueness and modal dependence on Brahman ; this view removes the defects of naive pluralism and monism. As the logical self, it derives its substantiality from Brahman, and is called its *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa*, *upādēya* and *aṃs'a*. As the ethical self, the *jīva* has moral freedom but dedicates itself to the service of the Lord who is the *ṣēsī* or *svāmī*. As the aesthetic ego, it is made of beauty which is a joy for ever and which is imparted to it by the absolute beauty of Brahman. The *ātman* derives its form and function

from Brahman, depends on His redemptive will and exists for His aesthetic satisfaction, and is therefore His *s'arīra*. It is different from Brahman in the denotative aspect as it is a unique individual, and one with Him as it connotes Him as its Self. This is the paradox of the theory of *prakāra* which alone satisfies the needs of theistic monism and reconciles monadism and pantheism. The term '*ātman*' brings out the meaning of the *jīva* and its relation to *Paramātman* or Vāsudēva, and the terms 'soul,' 'spirit' and 'self' are not adequate enough for the purpose. This view has the modesty and merit of ascribing the evils of life and the irrationalism of the universe to the *avidyā*-ridden *jīva* and purity and perfection to Brahman. As *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* affirms the fundamental similarity of the intelligence of all *jīvas* and also of Brahman, it provides full scope for the promotion of spiritual brotherhood and social solidarity.

The metaphysician who speculates on the nature of Brahman turns *mumukṣu* when he seeks liberation from the miseries of metempsychosis by re-union with Brahman. By reflecting on the trivial and transient pleasures of life here and in *Svarga* he becomes sick-minded; but such a pessimism is only a passing mood as it leads to a positive yearning for *Brahmajñāna*. The *mumukṣu* is interested more in shedding worldliness in bitter earnest than in escaping from the world. As a seeker after God, he prefers *bhakti* to *mukti*, if *mukti* is emptied of divine life and love. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* prescribes a course of *Vēdāntic* culture or *ṣādhana*, moral, spiritual and religious, for the *mumukṣu* to free himself from the confusions of *avidyā* and the fetters of *karma* and to attain Brahman. It consists in the building up of *bhakti* by means of *Karma Yōga*, *Jñāna Yōga* and *Bhakti Yōga* as described in the *Bhagavad*

Gītā. *Karma Yoga* consists in transfiguring *kāmya karma* into *niṣkāma karma* by avoiding the one-sided ethical views of hedonism and rationalism. *Kāmya karma*, as action impelled by inclination and induced by the idea of utility, has no place in the *Gītā* view of morals. But *niṣkāma karma* is disinterested duty done for duty's sake as determined by *buddhi*. It is "renunciation in action and not of action," and leads to self-sovereignty. But it is only a negative view of morals; on its constructive side, every *karma* becomes a *kaiṅkarya* to God, and this is deduced by the moral insight that the ultimate subject or agent of moral action is *Īs'vara* Himself. *Karma*, on the moral level, implies the freedom of the self to shape its future though its *prārabdha karma* is causally determined and cannot be changed. From the religious standpoint *karma* including the duties of perfect obligation is consecrated service arising from attuning oneself to the will of God. *Niṣkāma karma* presupposes the spiritual knowledge of the *ātman* as it is and not merely as it does. The first step in the process is the knowledge of the distinction between *puruṣa* and the pseudo-self made in the moulds of *prakṛti* on account of *avidyā*, and the elimination of the false view of the self. The next stage is the practice of *yōgic* introversion by stilling the *vāsanās* and seeking the inner quiet by entering into *samādhi*. This is the *kaivalya* stage of the *ārūḍha* or the orison of spiritual *s'ānti*. But *kaivalya* is only on the outskirts of *mukti* or on the pathway to it, and it is a halfway house between the state of *dēhātmānubhava* and God-realization by *bhakti*.

Bhakti consists in changing self-centredness into God-centredness and turning the mind from sensuality to the spiritual love of God as the Self of all beings. Equipped with the seven *sādhanas* and disciplined by the eightfold *yōga*, the *bhakta*

chooses any one of the thirty-two *upāsanas* and meditates on Brahman as his *s'arīrin.* Meditation consists in the intellectual knowledge of Brahman as the *prakārī*, the feeling of His loving presence and the ceaseless practice of *bhakti* till the moment of death. Reflection clarifies the nature of *bhakti* as the loving recollection of a pre-natal contact with Brahman. Feeling changes recollection into a loving experience and Will makes the mood a devotional habit. The recognition of God becomes vivid like a direct cognition ; but the vividness of the vision is not the vision itself, but an intimation and foretaste of the realization of the bliss of Brahman in the world of *Vaikuṇṭha.* While *bhakti* is thus a continuous loving meditation on Brahman, in strict conformity to *Vēdāntic* injunctions and is open only to the three higher castes or *dvijas*, *prapatti*, as self-surrender to the redemptive grace of God, does not require the trying and tedious discipline of *bhakti* and opens the gateway of God to all *jīvas* including even the sub-human species. The distinction between the two has given rise to two divergent schools of thought, the *Tenkalai* and the *Vaḍakalai.* The former says that the grace of God flows where it listeth and the *prapanna* has only to respond to the free flow of antecedent grace by casting away the burden of responsibility and the conceit of self-righteousness. God seeks the sinner and would cease to be the Saviour if *mōkṣa* is to be won only by merit. The *Vaḍakalai* school treats *prapatti* as a *yōga* like *bhakti* on the ground that one who desires grace should also deserve it. It insists on contrition and deathless faith in the Saviour, as the way of opening the flood gates of *kṛpā.* The only effort required is the knowledge of the futility of mere human effort and casting oneself on the mercy of the Redeemer. This effortless effort is only a *vyāja* or occasion for the self-manifestation of mercy. If this view be

abandoned, the result would be to make God arbitrary, accept the theory of predestination and destroy the moral order of the world. In the former case, God seeks the sinner and wins him by His antecedent or unconditioned grace. The two schools are distinguished in various ways. The former is called by various names—justification by faith, the self-surrender theory or the *mārjāra* way in which the cat carries the kitten. The latter is called justification by works, the volitional theory or the *markaṭa* way in which the baby monkey clings to the mother. Both the schools accept the *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* view that S'rīman Nārāyaṇa Himself is both the *upāya* and the *upēya*, and in His dual capacity fulfils Himself as law and love. The *mumukṣu* has the instinct for God which cannot be explained by the analytic intellect ; and in explaining the alogical experience of divine life and love, it is immaterial to ask how much comes from God and how much from man. The dualism between *jñāna* and *ajñāna* in *Advaita* is dissolved in *Brahma-jñāna* ; likewise the dualism between *karma* and *kṛpā* is not solved, but dissolved in mystic experience.

The mystic experience of Nammāḻvār is the fruition of *bhakti* and *prapatti*, and is the consummation of *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* experience. The *Āḻvār* is a born mystic and his only hunger and thirst are the hunger and thirst for God. God is infinite love and the *Āḻvār's* longing for God is infinite and bursts the bounds of human personality. The true meaning of the *s'arīra-s'arīrī* relation is fully brought out in the *Āḻvār's* organic craving for God. Just as the body cannot live for a moment without the soul, the soul cannot live even for a second without the pulsation of the love of God, its *s'arīrin*. Allured by the bewitching beauty of God, the *Āḻvār* renounces the lusts of the flesh and is consumed by the flaming love

of Kṛṣṇa. The sublimity of his agony of separation in the dark night of the soul is unique even in mystic literature. When the *jīva* sheds its *ahaṅkāra* and is purified in the furnace of love, it attains its home in the absolute and is immersed in immortal bliss. The *Āḷvār* returns from his blissful state, invites the world to share his joy and says to every one : " Come and see." Though the ardent *prapanna* is practically a *mukta* even in the state of embodiment and is free from all *karma*, he is absolutely purified only when he crosses the ocean of *saṃsāra* and reaches the headquarters of reality. It is only when the phenomenal world of space-time and causality and the moral sphere of *karma* are transcended that there is real *mukti* or freedom from embodiment. Then the *Brahmavit* realizes the world of Brahman and is immersed in immortal *ānanda*. The goal of *Brahmajñāna* is *Brahmānanda*, and it is the most valued of the eternal values of the *mukti*. The *mukta* regains his unitive-consciousness by renouncing the separatist outlook, and sees everything with the eye of Brahman under the form of eternity in the spaceless space of timeless time. Even the *Upaniṣad* fails to describe the nature of this *Ānandalōka* and resorts to poetic metaphor and analogy to express the inexpressible state. The *prapanna's* uniqueness of being is lost in the universality of divine life and selfless service to the *s'ēṣī*. The *Āḷvārs* and the *ācāryas* who have had a soul sight of Brahman find their supreme joy for ever in serving the Lord in His *līlā* of love and world redemption.

SECTION II

Before attempting a critical estimate of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, it is necessary to examine the main charges levelled against it, in the light of its central features as summarized in the

foregoing section and the more elaborate explanation in the work itself. Every philosophy has to be understood from its highest standpoint and evaluated in terms of the ideals of immanent criticism gained by such sympathetic insight. The chief points of criticism may be grouped in the order of the methods of study adopted in this work, and answered from the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* standpoint. The first charge relates to the *pramāṇa*, and is against its acceptance of non-*Vēdic* authority like that of the *Pāñcarātra* and the Tamil *Prabandha*. It is met by reminding the critic that in philosophy the value of a truth is more important than its origin and that, even as regards origin, the *Pāñcarātra* as the word of God contains the essentials of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Prabandha* as the experience of the seers of God has acquired the status of the *Vēda*.[1] The spiritual motive of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is at least as valuable as its epistemology, and it gives in effect a liberal interpretation of the *Vēda* as a body of eternal spiritual truths spiritually verified by *ṛṣis* and *Āḷvārs* and verifiable by others, and such a view is worthy more of commendation than of criticism. The second objection is to the *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* view of ontology that the *sat* without a second is *saguṇa* Brahman ; and what is called *nirguṇa* is the negation not of *saguṇa*, but of *hēya guṇa* or evil in the divine nature. The opponents argue that Rāmānuja is only on the logical or theological level and does not rise to the higher level of the intuition of Reality which is more than mere existence. To him the Real is not the real in itself, but the real for thought which is a concrete universal. *Īs'vara*, the God of religion is made in the moulds of logic to suit common sense, and suffers from the self-contradictions of the finite-infinite. This is not a single objection

[1] Even other schools base their authority on overbeliefs in minor *Upaniṣads* and other sources of knowledge and some of them reject the *Vēda* itself if it does not support their main theory.

but a complex question, and suffers from confusion. The philosophy of *nirguṇa* Brahman is inconceivable, as *nirguṇa* Brahman is a concept and at the same time transcends conceptual life. There is no affinity between the Absolute of Hegel and that of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, as the former is based on dialectics and the latter on *s'āstraic* authority. Besides, every *Vēdāntin* transcends the logical level and relies on intuition, and it is not true to say that Rāmānuja occupies the logical level and S'aṅkara the intuitional. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as a philosophy of religion identifies the Absolute of philosophy with the God of religion and does not accept the theory of two Brahmans.

The charge against its cosmology is that Brahman cannot be the material and efficient cause of the world of *cit-acit* in the *s'arīra-s'arīrī* relation. If, as the theory says, *cit-acit* as the body of God is the material cause and the soul of God is the efficient cause, it is like saying that we take half a fowl for cooking and leave the other half to lay eggs. Here the metaphysical view of " pan-organismal monism " is mistaken for a mathematical one. The creative urge is spatialized and dissected into parts. The critic next asks: " How can the changeless Brahman become the changing universe ? " This is the crux of every *Vēdāntic* philosophy, and every school has to rely on *śāstra* as the only authority for its explanation. Rāmānuja, following the *Sūtrakāra*, says that Brahman is in the changing world, but is not the changing world, as He is immanent in the logical aspect and eminent in the ethical. Brahman is ever pure and perfect, and the imperfections of life are traceable to the moral freedom of the *jīva* and the whole process is a *līla* of love for making *muktas*. The critic mistakes cosmology for mythology when he explains the reality of the cosmic process and

purpose in terms of anthropomorphism and the myth-making tendency of man. The remark of the critic that Rāmānuja tells fairy tales and narrates beautiful stories of the other world with the confidence of one who had personally assisted in the origination of the world is not serious and does not call for criticism. The fourth objection is a frontal attack on the key-thought of Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of the world. There is interaction between soul and body and the *jīva* suffers from the manifold ills of the body. Brahman as the *s'arīrin* of all *jīvas* who constitute his body should suffer from the ills of the infinite number of *jīvas* and become a *saṃsārin* on a cosmic scale. A true understanding of the *s'arīra-s'arīrī* relation in terms of immanence and transcendence will remove this misconception. The infinite enters into the finite as its Self and infinitizes its content. The relation expresses in metaphorical language the deep metaphysical and mystic idea of the spiritual intimacy between the *ātman* and *Paramātman* who descends into the *ātman* and deifies it. The whole *S'ārīraka S'āstra* will be stultified if logical immanence and spiritual eminence are not vitally related.

The chief difficulty in *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic* psychology is the apparent contradiction between the finite self and its all-pervading attributive consciousness. Rāmānuja explains it by the *Sūtra* analogy of the lamp and its luminosity. There is the same infinity in the atom as in the stellar space. From the point of view of the ultimate experience of the released self in *mukti*, it is clear that the *mukta* like Vāmadēva has the direct intuition of the infinite and also cosmic consciousness. The finite-infinite nature of the self is deduced from this intuition, and this view does full justice to the

pluralistic view of *nānā-jīva* and the monistic ideal of the unitive consciousness, and is more satisfactory than the solution offered by *Advaita* to the problem of the existence of a plurality of *jīvas* even after the experience of identity by the first *jīvanmukta*. The finite-infinite problem is really a stumbling block in every school of philosophy; but Rāmānuja's solution has the advantage of the support of *s'āstra* and spiritual experience. He reveals spiritual modesty when he attributes the contradiction to the *jīva* and not to Brahman. A more serious difficulty arises from the definition of the *jīva* as a unique monad or *vis'ēṣya* and at the same time as a mode of Brahman or *vis'ēṣaṇa*. The *jīva* has its own nature and moral and spiritual worth; but its individuality is not self-centred and exclusive, as its centre is the self-luminous Brahman. The self exists with the inner Self as its life and light. This view does full justice to theism and pantheism and satisfies the ethical and mystical consciousness.

The ethical problem of Rāmānuja is the dilemma of determinism. The *puruṣa* is either determined by *prakṛti* and the *guṇas* or controlled by the will of God. He is thus caught between the horns of fatalism and divine determinism. This defect is removed by escaping between the horns of the dilemma and pointing to the third alternative, namely, the freedom of the self on the moral level. The self has the will to attain self-sovereignty by overcoming the *guṇas*, to seek *mukti* and to attune itself to the will of the supreme Self. The seventh objection is raised against the relation between *karma* and *kṛpā* as the two are really self-discrepant. *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism*, as an ethical religion, recognizes the dualism between the two, but calls attention to the reign of the law of love in the domain of religious experience. Godhead is one, but

works in the dual capacity of *Īs'vara-Īs'varī* in the interests of world redemption. *Īs'vara* is the God of righteousness who is free from arbitrariness and cruelty as He metes out justice to every one according to his *karma* or desert, and is at the same time the Redeemer, as S'rī or Love enthrones Herself in the heart of divine law. Law and love may be analysed logically but cannot really be divided, and it is the supreme merit of *S'rī Vaiṣṇavism* that it accepts the organic relation between law and love and recognizes the reign of love in the supreme realm of religion. *Mukti* is as much a gift as a gain, and it is impossible without the grace of the *guru* and God or *guru* and *Īs'vara prasāda*.

The eighth charge is that *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, in its mystic aspect, savours of the evils of sentimentalism and erotism. This criticism was considered at some length in the relevant chapters and traced to misunderstanding. Humanity should not be judged by its aberrations ; and every religion has a right to be understood and appreciated in the light of its best exponents and exemplars. *Vis'iṣṭādvaitic Vaiṣṇavism* defines God as Love and religion as the life of God in the love of man, and insists on the dual discipline of thought and feeling in its scheme of devotion as *bhaktirūpāpannajñāna* or *matinalam* as Nammāḷvār calls it. The *Gītā* defines the true devotee as *jñānī* because he knows that God alone sustains him as his *s'arīrin*, and loves Him for love's sake without any fear or love of gain ; but such love cannot be called intellectual love, as the Lord of love seeks the *jñānī* as his *s'arīrin* and is sustained by such love, Love is reciprocal, but is a unitive experience ; and the *rāsa līlā* is a sublime expression of the *līlā* of love and it is only the pure in heart who are free from sexuality even in thought that can have a glimpse of its beatitude.

The ninth is the familiar criticism that Rāmānuja's world of *mukti* or *Paramapada* is anthropomorphic and is a glorious picture of an earthly paradise in which the *Vaiṣṇavites* enjoy all the pleasures of the senses and call it the bliss of *Vaikuṇṭha*. Amidst the delights of sparkling rivers, trees laden with delicious fruits, gentle breezes and golden sunshine, they drink and dance, sing and feast and sometimes hold philosophic converse with one another. But this criticism is more a satire than a sympathetic view, and applies not to Rāmānuja's picture but to the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* on which it is based. Rāmānuja insists on *vivēka* and *vairāgya* as essential steps to *mukti*, and describes it as a world beyond space and time and a state which only the purified and perfected *mukta* can enjoy. The *Upaniṣad* employs poetic or allegoric language to describe the infinite beyond the senses; but the critic mistakes it for the infinite in the senses by a process of *adhyāsa*. The *Upaniṣad* refers to *Brahma-gandha*, *Brahma-rūpa*, *Brahma-rasa* and *Brahma-ānanda* in terms of *Brahmānubhava*; but the whole sense is destroyed if the stress is on *gandha*, *rūpa* and *rasa* and not on Brahman. In the unitive experience of Brahman in the world of *ānanda*, the seer transcends the barriers of divided life and his thought expires in enjoyment.

The tenth and last objection is directed against the philosophy as a whole. As a system of theistic monism which tries to mediate between theism and monism, it shares the defects of both without having their advantages and falls between two stools. As a philosophy of religion it is not consistent with itself, as in theory it is non-dualistic and in practice theistic. Though it combats the schools of *Bhēdābhēda*, it does not radically differ from them in its

attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable elements of *bhēda* and *abhēda*, and is often identified with them. The main point in all these objections is the criticism not of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* but of synthetic philosophy itself; and it is well-known that the philosophers who hold extreme view do not like to meet, and mistake synthesis for compromise or eclecticism. But *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is as hostile to *Bhēdābhēda* as *Advaita*, owing to the absurdity of the *Bhēdābhēda* assertion of the co-existence of contradictories, and its great defect in the predication of evil to the divine nature. The most inspiring truth of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is its definition of God as love. Love mediates between thought and will by inspiring the former and illumining the latter, and, guided by love, the pluralist and the monist go hand in hand without being at arm's length.

SECTION III

Vis'iṣṭādvaita as *S'ārīraka S'āstra* is entirely different from other systems of Indian philosophy, *āstika* and *nāstika*, and it has its own peculiar meaning and value. As a matter of fact, every system of Indian philosophy has a distinct individuality of its own, due probably to its insistence on a clear and distinct knowledge of the *pramāṇas* as a preliminary to philosophical enquiry and the formation of the intellectual habit of definiteness in polemic warfare. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is different from *Dvaita* in spite of the affinities between the two systems caused by their opposition to *Advaita*. The ideas of *Ubhaya Vēdānta*, immanent causality, *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa* and the similarity of all *muktas* in the unitive experience of the bliss of Brahman are peculiar to *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, and do not meet with the approval of the *Dvaitavādin*. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is opposed to the *Advaita* theory of *Māyāvāda* and identity

philosophy, as it affirms the reality of *jagat* and recognizes only *vis'iṣṭa aikya* and not *svarūpa aikya*. It is entirely opposed to every school of *Bhēdābhēda*, as the latter predicates imperfections to Brahman. Rāmānuja's exposition of the *Sūtras* is different from that of S'rīkaṇṭha and S'rīkara in spite of their many common philosophical ideas, as Rāmānuja denies supremacy to S'iva and the theory of causality which makes S'iva the efficient cause of the world. But, owing to its all-comprehensive character, *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* accepts, whatever is coherent with its unity, in other systems, though it gives a new meaning to them. It has no objection to the *Nyāya* theory of the *pramāṇas*, the *satkāryavāda* and the psychology of the *Sāṅkhyas* and the *yōgic* discipline and the primacy given to morals by the *Mīmāmsaka*, as they fit into its system, though their meaning is transfigured. The system of Rāmānuja has much in common with the *Vaiṣṇavite* teachings of Caitanya and Vallabha who followed him, but it does not approve of the *Acintya Bhēdābhēdavāda* of Caitanya and the *S'uddhādvaita* of Vallabha. Thus from the point of view of *siddhānta*, *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* has a continuous tradition through the ages and has its peculiar meaning and value in the history of Indian philosophy.

Philosophy is a persistent enquiry into the nature of Reality in its threefold aspects of nature, self and God or *acit*, *cit* and *Īṣvara*, and different systems of thought were deduced by possible combinations of the three *tattvas*. Phenomenalism denies the noumenal reality of the *tattvas* and lapses into nihilism like that of Buddhism. The concept of Reality as either matter, self or God has given rise to the three monistic schools of materialism, the subjectivism of the *Ēkajīva-vāda* and the identity philosophy of *nirguṇa* Brahman. The

combinations of two *tattvas* lead to the formulation of the Jaina and *Sāṅkhyan* systems and the schools of personalism. The *Vais'ēṣika* and the schools of *Vēdānta* including practical *Advaita* recognize the existence of all the three *tattvas*. But it is *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* that brings out the integral and organic unity of the *tattvas*.

The *Vēdāntic* systems, *Dvaita*, *Advaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*, are often identified with the western systems of theism, monism and pantheism, though the points of resemblance are not essential. As the western views overlap, blur distinctiveness and have not the well-defined character of *Vēdānta*, there is no basis for comparison and the establishment of affinities. For example, all *Vedāntiç* schools, unlike the western varieties, have faith in the co-ordination of the *pramāṇas* including the *Vēda*, the theory of *manas* as an internal sense organ evolved from *prakṛti*, the existence of the eternal *ātman*, the moral order of *karma* and the spiritual realization of *mukti*. Theism is often defined as faith is an extra-cosmic God who creates souls by the mere fiat of His will, saves the believer and the elect and rejects the unbeliever. In its modern form, it is deeply influenced by pantheism. But *Dvaita* insists on eternal relations and eternal differences between *Īs'vara*, *cit* and *acit*, defines *Īs'vara* as the self-dependent and supreme Ruler of the universe, and the *jīva* as eternally dependent on His will, and assures *mukti* to the *sātvika jīva*. Pantheism affirms that God is all or all is God. It may connote pancosmism, acosmism, neo-Platonism or even panlogism. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* is not pantheistic in any of these senses, as it defines Brahman as the Self that is in all beings and beyond them. Monism as absolute idealism affirms the unity of all beings by denying pluralism and theism, but it may mean the

monism of Parmenides, Spinoza or Bradley. But *Advaita* is different from the western theories, as it affirms the identity of *jīva* and *Īs'vara* as experienced in *jīvanmukti*. This study of contrasts does not minimize the value of comparative study and of the synthetic method of stressing the points of convergence. But before the method is attempted, it is essential to know that the terms matter, soul, self or spirit and God, as employed in western thought, are different from the terms *prakṛti*, *ātman* and Brahman used in *Vēdānta*.

The fundamental difference in the two ways of approach lies in the *Vēdāntic* conception that the metaphysical problem is really the right understanding by the *mumukṣu* of the relation between the *ātman* and Brahman by *vivēka* and *vairāgya*. While western theism, monism and pantheism are mainly interested in ascertaining the nature of God in His relation to the universe, the *Vēdāntic* schools seek to discover the spiritual basis of nature and the exact status of the *ātman* in the realization of Brahman. It is profitless to a man to know the universe in its immensity and conquer its secrets without knowing his own soul and its divine foundations. The *Vēdāntin* is not satisfied with the knowledge of the external world and the pleasures of life here and in *Svarga*, but seeks the light of *Brahmajnāna* and eternal life. By realizing Brahman as the unity of the whole universe, the universe is known; but by knowing the universe we cannot know Brahman. While western thought is an outlook, *Vēdānta* is an insight into the nature of the inner self. This is well brought out in the classic instance of S'vētakētu whose pride that he knew all things was humbled by his father when he reminded the son that he had not the wisdom of *Brahmajñāna*, in the sorrows of Nārada who knew all sciences but was not

aware of Brahman which alone gives bliss, in the quest of Naciketas for eternal life beyond the historic successions of births and deaths, in the longing of Maitrēyī for infinite life and love, and in the cosmic intuition of Prahlāda which he communicated to his father, that everything in the cosmos was big with Brahman. Knowledge is an ocean and the *mumukṣu* should seek only what is relevant to his spiritual needs. Man has to dive into divinity and be merged in its immortal bliss.

God is the centre of the universe, and the philosopher who tries to understand the universe without knowing God simply goes round the circumference and never even comes near the centre. The more the scientist-philosopher seeks to unravel the mystery of nature, the more veils are left behind. Ignorance increases with knowledge and the riddle of the sphynx remains unsolved. The question of the evolution of the universe is wrapped in mystery and wonder and the theories of *Māyāvāda*, *Brahmapariṇāmavāda* and the origin of evil are admissions of the failure of the logical intellect to probe into the ultimate meaning of the universe of space-time. The vision of the cosmos divinely bestowed on Arjuna filled him with awe, and in utter humility he implored the cosmic Ruler to reveal His true nature as his eternal Friend and Saviour. The metaphysician who seeks to scan the starry heavens and to know the infinite stretch of space and time is perplexed by its increasing mystery and turns sceptic. But, if he becomes a mystic who seeks Brahman, he becomes a seer of Brahman. By knowing God everything else is revealed, and it is this truth that is revealed by the terms *Advaita*, *Dvaita* and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita*. It is enshrined in the text "Thou art That," and it sums up the wisdom of the *Upaniṣads* and brings out their immortal glory.

The term 'That' refers to Brahman and the term 'thou' to the *ātman*, and it is the supreme problem of *Vēdānta* to find out the exact connection between the two, known as the *jīvātman* and *Paramātman*. All the varieties of *Vēdāntic* experience are ultimately based on the knowledge of the text which is extolled by *Advaita* as the *Mahāvākya*. S'aṅkara explains it as the knowledge of the absolute identity or *aikya* between the *jīva* and *Īs'vara* by the elimination or sublation of the apparent self-contradictions contained in the relation between the two, due to nescience in its subjective and objective aspects of *avidyā* and *māyā*. *Dvaita* revolts against this irreverence, as religion is rooted in the worship of *Īs'vara* as the creator of the universe, and absolutely different from the *jīva* or the creature which for ever depends on *Īs'vara's* will. By applying the rules of grammar, logic and *Mīmāmsā*, it reads the text as "Thou art not That," and then it means "thou art His (*tasya*) as His *dāsa*." The schools of *Bhēdābhēda* claim to do equal justice to the aspects of *abhēda* and *bhēda* and interpret the *Upaniṣad* in the light of *bhēdābhēda*. To Bhāskara the judgment means mystic union or *ēkībhāva* in which the *jīva* merges into Brahman like a river losing itself in the ocean. Yādava, however, thinks that it includes difference as well as identity. To Caitanya it reveals the relation between the lover and the beloved in terms of *acintya bhēdābhēda*. Vallabha thinks that *Tat* is *tasmāt* or That from which the *jīva* emanates and that on the mystic side it is the ecstasy of love. S'rīkaṇṭha says that 'That' is S'iva and 'thou' is the *jīva* and the two become one in *mukti*. Rāmānuja expounds it as the relation of *s'arīra* and *s'arīrin* and affirms that Brahman, the cosmic ground, is the inner self of the *jīva* as its *s'arīrin*. His interpretation reveals the meaning of the text in the light of the illustrations employed in the *Upaniṣad*,

fits in with the context and satisfies the ends of synthetic philosophy.

In a sense every *Vēdāntic* system has a synthetic purpose, as it claims to be a criticism and a fulfilment of the previous systems. Each is a chronological and logical transition from its precursor, satisfies a specific historic need and is pragmatically justified. Every school seeks to satisfy the triple tests of *s'ruti*, *yukti* and *anubhava* and the three *prasthānas*. The *Advaita* of S'aṅkara avoids the extremes of the nihilism of Nāgārjuna and the theism of the *Naiyāyika* and claims to harmonize the six religions which were popular at the time. It deduces the theory of *Māyā* from the experience of *Advaita*. Bhāskara re-interprets S'aṅkara by his theory of *upādhis* as the real and not fictitious limiting adjuncts of *saguṇa* Brahman, who is perfect but is at the same time formless, and by his theory of *ēkībhāva* in the place of *aikya jñāna*. Yādava substitutes *Brahmapariṇāma* for *upādhis* and thinks of Brahman as the perfect Self with a form of His own and *mukti* as a *bhēdābhēda* relation between the *jīva* and Brahman. Niṃbārka posits an immanent *s'akti* in Brahman and largely follows Rāmānuja's idea of God. Rāmānuja's theory of Brahman seeks to avoid the extremes of *bhēdābhēda* and naive theism. Pūrṇaprajña brings out the theistic implications of *Vēdānta* by defining Brahman as omnipotent and omniscient and as the operative cause of the world, the *jīva* as a *vis'ēṣa* and not a *vis'ēṣaṇa* and *mukti* as the graded enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman as His eternal *dāsa*. Caitanya gives a mystic version of theism by defining God as love in terms of the *Acintya Bhēdābhēda* relation with the devotee. Vallabha stresses the non-dual aspect of theism by his theory of *S'uddhādvaita* in which he refers to emanation and

ecstasy. In this way every *Vēdāntic* school claims to synthesize extreme views and present a coherent view of nature, self and God.

On the whole it is *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* as *S'ārīraka S'āstra* that presents a synthetic view, *par excellence*, of *Vēdānta*, because it is its avowed aim to harmonize the seeming contradictions of the *S'ruti* in the light of the *Ghaṭaka S'rutis* by employing the *samanvaya* method, and it is the supreme merit of the *Bhāṣyakāra* to wind up the discussion with a note of harmony in the highest sense of the term "Thus everything is satisfactorily explained (*iti sarvaṃ samañjasam*)." It is the only philosophy of religion that affirms the self-identity of Brahman as the metaphysical, ethical and intuitional highest, and it interprets every *adhikaraṇa* in the first two chapters of the *Brahma Sūtras* as the establishment of Brahman as the supreme *tattva* for the purpose of experiencing Him as the supreme end or *puruṣārtha*. It is a spiritual syllogism in which the spiritual attainment of Brahman follows from philosophic knowledge. The theory of the *jīva* as the *s'arīra* of Brahman as defined by Rāmānuja fits in with the grammatical rule of *sāmānādhikaraṇya*, the logical principle of *apṛthaksiddda vis'ēṣaṇa*, the metaphysical view of *aṃs'a*, the cosmological idea of the *upādēya* as non-different from the *upādāna kāraṇa* and the ethico-religious truths of *karma* and *kṛpā*. The *nirguṇa* texts in the *Upaniṣad* do not deny *guṇa* but only *hēya guṇa* or the existence of imperfection in the divine nature. The *abhēda* texts do not deny the plurality of things but deny only the pluralistic view of Reality. The *bhēda* texts affirm the existence of eternal entities but deny their externality to Brahman. The *Kāraṇa S'rutis* deny the

Naiyāyika and the *Sāṅkhyan* views but affirm the immanence of Brahman and His transcendental eminence. The *S'rutis* that define the nature of Brahman (*s'varūpa nirūpaka dharma*) affirm self-determination and deny external determination. Bare denial is nothingness or vacuity and denial and affirmation imply each other, and negation is on a par with affirmation. *Aikya S'rutis* affirm *vis'iṣṭa aikya* and deny *svarūpa aikya*; they deny identity and affirm non-division. In this way, all the conflicting *Upaniṣadic* texts and the aching problems of philosophy are solved by the comprehensive idea that Brahman is the *s'arīrin* of all. S'rīkaṇṭha presents a *S'aivite* version of *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* and leans towards non-dualism. Synthesis in philosophy is the same as love in religion and love heals all discords and differences. Even from the point of view of valuation, the synoptic view holds good, because the values of truth, goodness and beauty which are realized by the *mukta* are conserved in the world of Brahman who is ever true, good, beautiful and perfect. The philosophy of love mediates between the metaphysics of *Advaita* and the ethics of *Dvaita*. It transforms Madhusūdhana Sarasvati, the monistic thinker, into a mystic drawn by the alluring beauty of Kṛṣṇa-*prēma* and Caitanya, the subtle logician, into a God-intoxicated lover.

The claim of *Vēdānta* to universality rests on the liberal interpretation of its essentials and the emphasis on the points of agreement and not on those of divergence, and *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* offers a basis for such rapprochement. On the analogy of the Kantian distinction between pure reason and practical reason and the mathematical and ethical methods of Spinoza, difference can be drawn between the pure *Advaita* of the *Māyāvādin* which employs the principle of *adhyāsa* and sublation in

establishing the philosophy of identity and the practical *Advaita* of the *Brahmavādin*, which accepts the reality of the world and the unitive consciousness by moral and spiritual discipline. Practical *Advaita* should accept the identity of the Absolute of philosophy and the God of religion, the coordination of *jñāna* and *Bhakti* as means to *mukti* and the need for the grace of God and the *guru* in the attainment of *mukti*. S'aṅkara the practical *Vēdāntin*, who accepts the *Bhāgavata* way of devotion and worships Gōvinda [1] and works for world welfare, is more helpful to humanity than S'aṅkara the dialectician, who destroys the world with the all-devouring weapon of sublation. The pure *Vis'iṣṭādvaitin* as a theistic monist and mystic has to accept the non-dualistic implications of the terms *apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa*, *vis'iṣṭa aikya*, non-difference in the causal relation, and *avibhāga*, and thus pracically recognize the points of rapprochement between his system and that of *Advaita* in the *vyāvahārika* state, which alone provides a basis for inter-*Vēdāntic* understanding. What is beyond *Vēda* and thought is beyond experience and is not a subject of enquiry. *Dvaita* rightly stresses the eternal distinction between Brahman, the *jīva* and the universe and the way of *bhakti* to *mukti* ; but it does not bring out the omnipotence of love and the loss not of, but in, personality which the mystic experiences in the ecstasy of communion. There is no sinner as such in the religion of love, and sin destroys itself by contacting divine love. The theory of Brahman as the All-Self or *s'arīrin* of all beings who is immanent in all *jīvas* and in all religions with a view to *brahmanizing* the self furnishes the most inspiring motive for spirituality and service. All philosophies and religions meet

[1] nārāyaṇa karuṇāmaya s'araṇam karavāṇi tāvakau caraṇau |
iti ṣaṭpadī madīyē vadanasarōje sadā vasatu ||—S'aṅkara's *Ṣaṭpadi*.

in *Vēdānta* and work hand in hand for the uplift of humanity and the establishment of the spiritual kinship of all *jīvas* including the sub-human species. The *Vēdāntin* is not a conservative that adores the past nor a progressivist that looks forward, but is a religious philosopher who seeks the Eternal One in and beyond the temporal, sees Him directly and works for universal salvation. Even the lowest of the low and the worst sinner can attain God if he but trusts Him. *Vis'iṣṭādvaita* with its innate genius for God invites humanity to share in its spiritual hospitality and see Him in all beings and in all sects. The *Gītā* as the quintessence of *Vēdāntic* wisdom brings out this inspiring message in the immortal words of *Bhagavān* "Whoever with true devotion worships any deity, in him I deepen that devotion and he ultimately reaches me"[1] and "Even those who worship other divinities worship me."[2]

[1] yō yō yām yâm tanum bhaktaḥ s'raddhayār-gitum ichati |
tasya tasyācalām s'raddhām tām ēva vidadhāmyabaṃ ||—*B.G.*, VII. 21.

[2] yēpyanyadēvatābhaktāḥ yajantē s'raddhayānvitāḥ |
tēpi māmēva kauntēya yajantyavidḥipūrvakaṃ ||—*B.G.*, IX. 23.

SANSKRIT GLOSSARY

A

abhāva : non-existence
abhēda : non-difference
abhigamana : morning worship
abhimāna : attachment
abhivyakta : manifested
abhyāsa : repetition
ācārya : preceptor
acētana : non-sentient
acintya : inconceivable
acit : see *acētana*
ādhara : sustainer ; support
adhēya : the supported
adhiṣṭhāna : substratum ; body ; the basis for mistaking the real for the unreal as in the shell-silver example
adhyāsa : super-imposition as in perceiving a rope as a snake
adṛṣṭa : unseen effect of one's actions caused by *karma* in the person who does it
Advaita : non-dualism
advitīya : without a second
āgama : religious treatise
ahaṃ : I ; ego
ahaṅkāra : egoism ; the spurious ego of matter ; a stage of *prakṛti* in its evolution

aikya : identity
ais'varya : lordship
ajaḍa : not *jaḍa*, immaterial
ajātavāda : the *Advaitic* view that *māyā* is non-existent
ajñāna ; ignorance
ākās'a : ether
akṣara : imperishable
amala ; pure
amṛta : immortal
aṃs'a : part or element of the *aṃs'in*
aṃs'in : one having *aṃs'as*
ānanda : bliss
ānandamaya : blissful
ananta : infinite
ananyārha-s'ēṣatva : absolute serviceability to One only
anavasthā : infinite regress
aṅga : limb ; what stands in a subsidiary relation to the principal
anirvacanīya : inexplicable
annamaya : consisting of food
anṛta : false
antaḥkaraṇa : inner organ, mind
antaḥpravēs'a : entering into
antaryāmin : the immanent one
aṇu : atom or monad
anubhava : experience
anumāna : inference
anupalabdhi : non-cognition of a thing when the conditions for cognition are available
anupapatti : impropriety
apacchēda nyāya : a rule in the *Pūrva Mīmāmsā*
apahatapāpmatva : purity

aparōkṣa : immediate ; direct
apavarga : release from *saṃsāra*
aprākṛta : matter without its mutability
apṛthaksiddha vis'ēṣaṇa : inseparable attribute
apūrva : an unseen and blind agency that rewards and punishes merit and demerit
apūrvatva : novelty
arcā : permanent incarnation of God
arcīrādimārga : the solar path (to *mōkṣa*)
ārjava : straight-forwardness
arthāpatti : presumption
arthavāda : glorificatory passage, not to be taken literally
arthapañcaka : the five truths
asat : the changeable, *i.e.*, matter
asatkhyāti : the theory that the void is knowable
asatkāryavāda : the theory that the effect, once non-existent, comes into being afterwards
ās'raya : locus
aṣṭāṅga : eightfold
āstika : believer
asura : demon
āsuric : demoniac
ātmabhāva : the nature of the *ātman*
ātmaikās'rayatva : dependent entirely on the Self
ātmaikaprakāratva : deriving its modal existence from the Self
ātmaikaprayōjanatva : entirely subserving the needs of the Self
ātmajñāna : knowledge of the self
ātman : self ; soul
āmānubhava : experience of the self
avatāra : incarnation
avibhāga : inseparability
avidvān : one who is not a *vidvān*

avidyā : ignorance ; an inner obscuring something or nescience which conceals the self-identity of Brahman, according to *Advaita*
avijñātā : one who does not know
avyakta : unmanifest

B

baddha : the bound (soul in *saṃsāra*)
bādhita : contradicted ; sublated
bala : strength
bhāgavata : devotee of God
bhāgavata-kaiṅkarya : service to the devotees of God
bhakti : devotion to God
bhaktirūpāpannajñāna : intellectual intuition or love of God ; *jñāna* turned into *bhakti*
bhāva : feeling
bhēda : difference
bhēdābhēda : identity in difference
bhōgya : object of experience or enjoyment
bhrama : error
Bhuvana sundara : God as Cosmic Beauty
Brahmajñāna : realization of Brahman
Brahman : the Absolute of philosophy that is also the god of religion
Brahmapariṇāmavāda : the theory that the Absolute transforms itself as the world
Brahmārpaṇa : offering to God
buddhi : intellect

C

caitanya : intelligence
carama-s'lōka : last verse

cētana : sentient
çit : sentient being

D

dama : control of the senses
ḍaṃbha : ostentation
darpa : pride
dars'ana : system of philosophy leading to the direct knowledge of Reality
dāsa : servant ; one who freely dedicates oneself to the services of God and godly men
dāsya : serviceability
dayā : mercy
dēhātmabhāva : imagining the body to constitute one's self
dhāraka : sustenance ; supporter
dharma : attribute ; duty
dharmabūtajñāna : attributive intelligence distinguished from substantive intelligence
dharmin : possessor of *dharma* or attribute
dhyāna : meditation
dhyāna-niyoga-vādin : one who holds that *dhyāna* is a prescribed discipline to attain *Brahmajñāna*
Divya-Prabandha : The sacred Tamil hymns of the *Āḷvars*
dravya : substance
dvandva : pair (of opposites)
dvēṣa : hatred

E

ēkajīva : a single self
ēkajīvavāda ; the theory that there is only one *jīva* or soul

G

ghaṭaka S'ruti : mediating text, *e.g.*, *Bṛ. Up.*, III. vii. 7 *et seq*
guru : spiritual teacher
guru paramparā : line of *gurus*

H

hita : means (to the chief end, Self-realization)

I

ijyā : the principal worship at midday as ordained in the *Pāñcarātra S'āstra*
indriyas : senses (cognitive and conative)
Īs'vara : God ; the inner controller of all beings

J

jaḍa : inert : (matter)
jagat : the cosmic order
jahadajahal-lakṣaṇā : the principle in *Advaita* of affirming the identity of *jīva* and *Īs'vara* by eliminating their differences
jīva : individual soul that has cognition, conation and feeling
jīvanmukti : *mukti* realized in life ; freedom in embodiment
jñāna : knowledge
jñāna-karma-samuccaya : the co-ordination of knowledge and action
jñānās'raya : locus of *jñāna*
jñātṛtva : the state of being the subject of knowledge or knower
jyōtiṣām jyōtis : light of lights

K

kaiṅkarya : consecrated service
kaivalya : self-realization
kalyāṇa guṇa : auspicious quality

kāma : desire
kāmya-karma : action prompted by desire
karma : action ; the result on the self of its previous actions
kārya Brahman : effected Brahman
kartṛtva : responsibility for action
kiṅkara : servant
kīrtana : singing
krama-mukti : progressive ascent to the realm of the supreme
krōdha : anger
kṛpā : mercy
kṣaṇika-vijñāna : momentariness of cognition
kṣētra : the body as the field where one reaps the result of past *karma*
kṣētrajña : the knower of the body, *i.e.*, the soul
kṣirābdhi : ocean of Milk

L

lakṣaṇa : definition
lakṣaṇā : secondary import
liṅga-s'arīra : subtle body
līlā : sport
lōka : world

M

Mahāvākya : the supreme *Upaniṣadic* texts (dealing with *Brahmajñāna* according to the *Advaitin*)
manana : reflection
manas : mind
manōmaya : mind-made ; mental
mantra : incarnation
māyā : cosmic illusion or nescience
māyāvāda : the theory that everything except Brahman is illusory or phenomenal

māyin : creator of *māyā* ; illusionist
Mīmāmsā : Interpretation of *Vēdic* injunctions
mokṣa : release from *saṃsāra* or bondage due to *karma*
mukta : released soul
mukti : release (from the round of births and deaths)
mūla-prakṛti : primordial matter or cosmic stuff
mūlāvidyā : primordial nescience
mumukṣu : one desiring release ; the seeker after salvation

N

nāma : name or form
nara : man
nāstika : unbeliever, athiest
nēti : not thus
nididhyāsana : steady meditation
nimitta-kāraṇa ; efficient cause
niravayava ; incapable of physical division ; partless
nirguṇa : without qualities—indeterminate
nirguṇa Brahman : Indeterminate Brahman
nirhētuka-kaṭākṣa : unconditioned (or operative) grace
nirupādhika : unconditioned
nirvēda : regret and repentence
nirvikalpāka pratyakṣa : indeterminate perception or cognition of the object for the first time
nirviṣēṣa : attributeless
nirvikāra : immutable
niṣkāma-karma : disinterested action
niṣprapañca-niyōga-vāda : the theory that regards *mukti* as cosmic dissolution
nitya-sūri : the eternally free
niyamēna prakāra ; invariable mode

niyantā : ruler ; controller

niyōga : injunction : unseen result produced by carrying out a *Vēdic* injunction

P

Pāñcarātra : certain scriptures accepted by S'rī Vaiṣṇavas, as revealed by Nārāyaṇa

pañcīkaraṇa : quintuplication : the theory that holds that every physical object contains all the five *bhūtas*

pāpa : sin

para : great

parama : supreme

paramapada : the supreme abode of Brahman

Paramātman : Supreme Self

pāratantrya : dependence on God

pariṇāma : change ; transformation

pariṇāma-vāda : See *Brahmapariṇāma-vāda*

parōkṣa : mediate

prācurya : abundance

pradhāna : primal nature ; see also *prakṛti*

prakāra : mode ; the *jīva* as a mode of God

prakārin : the substance which has modes ; Brahman

prakṛti : nature ; a modification of matter : also called *pradhāna*

pralaya : unmanifested condition of the universe ; dissolution of the universe

pramāṇas : sources of valid knowledge ; authorities

prāṇāyāma : control of the vital airs

prāpaka : one who leads to the *prāpya*

prapanna : one who has surrendered his self to God

prapatti : self-surrender to God

prāpti : attainment

prāpya : end to be attained

prārabdha-karma : previous deeds that have begun to produce their moral results ; *karma* that has begun to bear fruit
prārthanā : prayer
pratyakṣa : evidence of the senses or sense-perception
pratyaktva : self-awareness
prēmā : deep love
puṇya : an act of religious merit leading to *svarga*
puruṣa : person ; self
Puruṣōttama : the supreme self
puruṣārtha : ends of human endeavour
Pūrvapakṣa : *prima facie* view

R

rāga : desire
Rakṣaka : Redeemer
rajas : the quality of *prakṛti* producing restless activity
rasa : aesthetic taste ; deliciousness
rathī : the master in the chariot
ṛṣi : seer ; sage
ruci : taste
rūpa : form

S

s'abda : verbal testimony ; scriptural authority
sādhana : a course of religious discipline
sādhyōpāya : the means to *mōkṣa* which has to be effected by the aspirant
saguṇa : possessing attributes
sākṣin : witness
s'akti : power
samādhi : deep contemplation or introversion

sāmānādhikaraṇya : syntactic equation of terms denoting the same thing, but connoting different attributes ; grammatical apposition

samanvaya : method of reconciliation

samavāya : inherence, a category of the *Vais'ēṣikas*

samaṣṭi : aggregate

saṃbandha : relation

saṃsāra : empirical life including the cycle of births and deaths ; bondage

saṃs'aya : doubt

saṃs'lēṣa : union

s'ama : control of mind

sañcita-karma : past action that has not yet commenced to fructify

saṅkalpa : will

saṅkalpās'raya : dependent on the will of God

saṅkōca : contraction

sannyāsa : renunciation

saptavidhānupapatti : seven-fold objections raised by Rāmānuja against the *Advaitin's* theory of *avidyā*

s'arīra : body

s'arīrin : the owner of the hody

s'arīra-s'arīri saṃbandha : the relation between body and soul ; between the finite self and the Absolute as expounded by Rāmānuja

sat : being ; a sentient being different from *asat* or material object

satkārya vāda : the view that the effect is pre-existent as cause and not non-existent

satkhyāti : realism

satyakāma : self-fulfilled desire

satyasya satyaṃ : Real of reals ; real Reality ; the True of the true

sattva : the quality of *prakṛti* leading to happiness and harmony
savikalpaka-jñāna : determinate knowledge
savis'ēṣa : determinate ; with qualities
savis'ēṣa-jñāna : determinate knowledge ; apprehension of the new object in the light of the old
s'ēṣa : one who exists for the purpose of the *s'ēṣin*, or one who is in tune with the will of God
s'ēṣin : one who utilizes the *s'ēṣa* for His purpose
siddhānta : the final view
siddōpāya : the means to *mōkṣa* which is self-accomplished, *i.e.*, God
s'ivam : auspicious
skandha : aggregate
smaraṇa : remembering
s'ravaṇa : hearing
sṛṣṭi : creation
s'ruti : the *Vēda*
s'uddha : pure
sundara : beautiful
s'ūnya : non-existent, like the sky-flower ; bare negation
s'ūnyavāda : theory of nihilism
svabhāva vāda : theory of naturalism
svadharma : one's own duty (based on birth and station in life)
svādhyāya : study of the *Vēda*
svāmin : master
Svarga : the world of celestial pleasures as a reward for good deeds done here
svarūpa : essential nature
svarūpaikya : absolute identity
svarūpa nirūpaka dharma : determining attributes
svayam jyōtis : self-effulgent

T

tamas : the quality of *prakṛti* resulting in indolence and inertia
tanmātra : subtle element
tattva : truth ; reality
tattva-traya : the three categories or ultimate factors of reality : matter, spirit and God
tējas : energy

U

ubhaya-liṅga : with two signs (a topic in the *Vēdānta Sūtras* dealing with the two-fold nature of Brahman as perfect and free from imperfections)
upādāna : collecting materials (for worship of God)
upādāna-kāraṇa : material or immanent cause
upādhis : limiting adjuncts, real or fictitious
upakrama : the beginning of a topic
upamāna : comparison
upapatti : fitness, propriety
upāsaka : aspirant
upasaṃhāra : termination
upāya : means to an end
upēya : end to be attained
utkramaṇa : ascent from the body (of the *ātman*)
utkrānti : see *utkramaṇa*

V

vāda : argument ; theory
vaikuṇṭha : the world of Brahman
vairāgya : freedom from the desires of sensibility ; abandonment of worldly desires
varṇāśrama-dharma : duties based on birth and station in life
vēdana : knowledge or loving meditation or *bhakti*
vibhu : pervasive
vicāra : enquiry

vicchinna : limited
vidhēyatva : the quality of being controlled
vidvān : the wise man who knows Brahman
vijñāna : knowledge
vijñānamaya : the knowing self
vikāra : modification
vikāsa : expansion
viparyaya : wrong notion
vipralambha : separation from the beloved one
virakti : see *vairāgya*
virōdhi : obstacle
vīrya : heroism
vis'ēṣaṇa : an attribute of an object
vis'ēṣya : possessed of attributes
vis'lēṣa : separation
vis'iṣṭa : with attributes
Vis'iṣṭādvaita : the theory of the Absolute as Brahman the *s'arīrin* with the universe as *s'arīra* ; pan-organismal monism
vis'iṣṭaikyam : unity in the form of an organic whole involving several attributes
vis'varūpa-dars'ana : the cosmic form of God revealed to Arjuna on the field of Kurukṣētra
vyāja : occasion
vyāvahārika-satya : phenomenal or relative reality

Y

yajña : worship
yathārtha : corresponding to fact
yathārtha-khyāti : the theory that all knowledge is real
yōgin : One who intuits Reality
yukti : Argumentation

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Abbreviations : *A*=Advaita : *BB*=Bhēdābhēda ; *Bh*=Bhāskara ; *D*=Dvaita ; *M*=Madhva ; *R*=Rāmānuja ; *S*=S'aṅkara ; *V*=Vis'iṣṭādvaita ; accg. to=according to

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

B. G.	Bhagavad Gītā
Bṛ. Up.	Bṛhadāraṇyakōpaniṣad
Ch. Up. / Ch. Upan.	Chāndōgya Upaniṣad
Kaṭh. Up.	Kaṭhōpaniṣad
Kauṣī. Up.	Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad
Muṇḍ. Up.	Muṇḍakōpaniṣad
Pr. Up.	Pras'nōpaniṣad
S. S.	S'ārīraka Sūtras
S. B.	S'rī Bhāṣya
S. B. E.	Sacred Books of the East
Sv. Up. / Svēt. Up.	S'vētās'vatara Upaniṣad
Tait. Up. / Taitt.	Taittirīyōpaniṣad
Tiru.	Tiruvāimoḷi
V. P.	Viṣṇu Purāṇa
V. S. / Vē. Sū.	Vedānta Sūtras
Y. M. D. / Y. D.	Yatīndramatadīpikā

D